KENTUCKY FAMILY LITERACY PROGRAM

2002-2003 PROGRAM EVALUATION
FINAL REPORT

Prepared for:

Kentucky Adult Education

Council on Postsecondary Education

T W + A

By:

THOMAS, WARREN + ASSOCIATES

1501 W. Amelia, Suite 101
Phoenix, AZ 85015

(602) 277-1957

www.twaaconsulting.com

JUNE 30, 2004

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

All children are born ready and willing to learn
Parents are the child's first teacher
The home is the child's first classroom
All parents want their children to be successful . . .
thus the Kentucky Family Literacy Program.[1]

This report presents the results of the 2002-2003 Family Literacy Program evaluation conducted by THOMAS, WARREN + ASSOCIATES (TW+A) for the Kentucky Adult Education Council on Postsecondary Education (CPE). The impetus for an external evaluation of the 2002-2003 program was a commitment to CPE by the Adult Education Action Agenda in 2002 to conduct evaluations on major funded initiatives in order to facilitate growth and continuous program improvement. A major expansion in the family literacy program in 2002-2003 led to the establishment of family literacy services in every county in Kentucky. Thus, this evaluation included all family literacy programs that had been in existence for at least one year.

The goal of this study was to identify barriers, successes, opportunities, and trends in the delivery of family literacy programs and provide recommendations for program improvement. Data for this study were gathered from existing state databases; from administrators, program staff, and adult learners using specially designed survey instruments; and from observations recorded during onsite visits to a sample of 40 programs. In order to determine the effectiveness of Kentucky's family literacy program and to provide recommendations for its improvement TW+A's analysis focused on the identification of:

- Successful model programs and attributes of programs that were significantly correlated with attainment of performance goals;
- Barriers, successes, opportunities, and trends;
- Common success factors and common factors that inhibit success.

What is Family Literacy?

The Kentucky family literacy initiative strives to break the intergenerational cycle of under-education and poverty and move families to self-sufficiency by targeting literacy for both the parent or caregiver and the child. Family literacy in Kentucky has four integrated components: adult education for parents; literacy-focused education for children; regular parent and child together time (PACT); and parenting education.

The goals of the program are:

- To provide parents with instruction in basic academic and employability skills;
- To provide parents with instruction/activities emphasizing parenting and other life skills;

---

[1] Adapted from an unknown source by Dr. Gary A. Eyre.

- To provide children with age-appropriate educational instruction[2];and

- To provide developmentally appropriate experiences which require interaction between parents and children.

The Development of Family Literacy in Kentucky

The 2002-2003 family literacy program was administered by the Department for Adult Education and Literacy (DAEL)[4]as an adjunct adult education activity. The Kentucky State Plan for Adult Education and Family Literacy, 1999, revised 2001, states that Adult Basic Education (ABE) and Literacy services are the cornerstone of DAEL's adult education activities. The adult education program provides literacy/adult basic education/GED services, and employability and life skills instruction. While ABE also provides family and life skills instruction, DAEL funds the family literacy program to provide intensive family literacy services. ABE is funded with state and federal funds; family literacy programs are funded with state funds only.

Kentucky established the first state funded family literacy program in the nation in the mid-1980's with the enactment of the Parent and Child Education (PACE) legislation. Originally designed to meet the needs of the rural, most impoverished counties of Kentucky, PACE grew to provide a wider focus for family literacy and was succeeded by the DAEL family literacy program. Family literacy services today are offered by a variety of providers including KYAE, Family Resource Centers, Head Start, Title I, Migrant Education, the State Preschool Program Kentucky Education Reform Act (KERA), and Even Start.

The need for statewide coordination of family literacy services led to the founding of the Kentucky Institute for Family Literacy (KIFL) in 2000. The task of KIFL is to provide state level coordination and alignment of requirements and regulations across all the programs that administer or support family literacy. Major efforts of KIFL include providing professional development and technical assistance, the establishment of a Family Resource Center, and the promotion of public awareness. The DAEL is one of five entities that support and provide funding for KIFL.

The passage of Senate Bill 1 in April 2000, a major reform effort in state government public policy, established adult education and literacy as the highest program priority. The Council on Postsecondary Education was charged with the responsibility of establishing policy direction for adult education, as well as ensuring effective coordination of adult education service delivery, and was given additional funding from the Adult Education Trust Fund.

---

[2] The child's education component is not part of this evaluation of the 2002-2003 family literacy program.

[4] The title, Department of Adult Education and Literacy (DAEL), has been changed to Kentucky Adult Education (KYAE). As used in this document DAEL refers to actions before 2004 and KYAE refers to present day; however they should be considered interchangeable.

The increase in appropriations from Senate Bill 1 led to a 100% increase in funding for family literacy and the development of the Kentucky State Plan for Adult Education and Family Literacy[5] which included recommendations to:

- Expand family literacy services to Kentucky counties.
- Increase participation in family literacy programs from 1000 families in 2000-2001 to 5,000 families in 2003-2004.
- Institute a funding formula by county based on the number of people at low levels of literacy with a minimum funding level of $20,000.
- Set funding at one family per $1,000.
- Show evidence of collaboration with Head Start, the local board of education preschool program, or other service providers for the child-education, parenting, and the parent-with-child components.
- Require family literacy programs to meet quality indicators and performance measures as a condition for funding.
- Track results of family literacy programs using a data collection system based on the set of performance indicators.
- Conduct professional development in partnership with the Kentucky Institute for Family Literacy (KIFL).

Consequently a funding formula by county was put in place and a minimum of one family per $1,000 was allotted. Family literacy program services expanded from 43 counties in FY 2000 to 87 counties in FY 2002. The number of families grew from 1,485 in FY 2000 to 2,890 in FY 2002. Through an inter-agency effort directed by KIFL, the Kentucky Family Literacy Performance Indicators were developed in 2001 and put in place as the basis for evaluation of Even Start, a federally funded family literacy program administered under the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE), and DAEL-funded family literacy programs. Family literacy programs throughout the state tracked results through a data collection system based on the set of performance indicators. KIFL provided staff development and technical assistance support.

In early 2001, CPE endorsed the goal of developing a Kentucky statewide plan to create family literacy programs in every county at the end of two years. This goal, accomplished in one year, led to the funding of family literacy services in every county by July, 2002. Figure 1 shows the growth in the number of counties having a family literacy program and the growth in enrollment in the number of families. For the 2002-2003 study year there were 120 programs, a 38% growth from the previous year; 33 of the programs for the study year were in their first year of implementation; 39 were in their second year of implementation; and 48 programs varied in
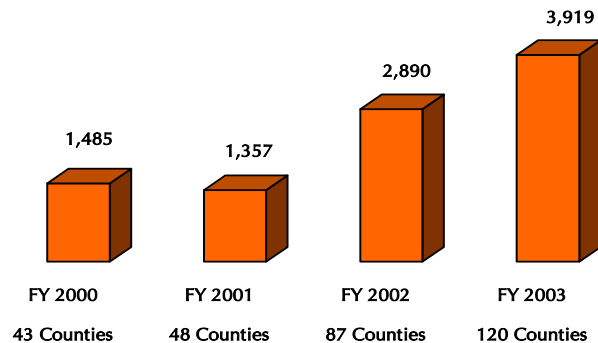
---

[5] King, C. and R Stagnolia, "Kentucky State Plan for Adult Education and Family Literacy," 2001, KYAE, ch. 3, sec. 3.1.
  <http://adulted.state.ky.us/kentucky_state_plan.htm#Performance%20Measures>

length of service, some having developed from the original PACE program. There were 3,919 families enrolled in 2002-2003. Program sizes ranged from 2 families to 256 families.

Figure 1 ~ Family Literacy Enrollment, All Programs

Measuring Kentucky Family Literacy Program Performance

The roots of the program performance measures in Kentucky are in Title II, Section 212, of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA). WIA requires a state adult education and literacy comprehensive performance accountability system and Kentucky began development of such a system in 1993 under a grant from the U.S. government.[6] In June 2001, the Literacy Involves Families Together (LIFT) Act required Even Start to submit performance indicators for its programs. This requirement led to the development of a common set of performance indicators for measuring the success of the state's family literacy programs.

The performance indicators consist of a defined set of measures, consistently applied and comparable across programs, which describe the success of the adult learners in family literacy programs in meeting their educational goals. Each measure has associated goal levels used to define program success, which are set by the state government. The 20 Kentucky performance indicators are shown in Table 1.

For the purposes of this evaluation, these 20 indicators were broadly grouped into 4 categories reflecting the components of a family literacy program: adult education, parenting education, parent and child together (PACT) instruction, and enrollment. The first indicator in Table 1, program enrollment, stands as its own category. The following 15 indicators relate to adult education, and the next three indicators relate to parenting education. Finally, the last indicator in Table 1 also is its own category, PACT instruction.

---

[6] King, C. and R Stagnolia, "Kentucky State Plan for Adult Education and Family Literacy," 2001, KYAE <http://adulted.state.ky.us/kentucky_state_plan.htm#Performance%20Measures>

The performance indicator data was central to the evaluation and its findings. For ease of analysis, interpretation, and reporting of the findings from TW+A's evaluation, the indicators were grouped into 4 categories in the fashion described. The benefits of this grouping and consequences to the findings are:

- ■ The evaluation findings are associated with only 4 measures of performance, which are referred to as the aggregate performance indicators;

- ■ Broad patterns in performance and influences on performance are easily identified;

- ■ The results are more rapidly and readily interpreted;

Table 1 ~ The 20 Kentucky Performance Indicators for 2002-2003

Indicator	Goal Level
Program Enrollment	*A function of county demographics*
Beginning ABE Literacy Completions	28%
Beginning ABE Completions	33%
Low Intermediate ABE Completions	35%
High Intermediate ABE Completions	38%
Low Adult Secondary Completions	40%
Beginning Literacy ESL Completions	27%
Beginning ESL Completions	31%
Low Intermediate ESL Completions	34%
High Intermediate ESL Completions	36%
Low Advanced ESL Completions	32%
High Advanced ESL Completions	27%
Placement Post Secondary Ed/Training	28%
Placement In Unsubsidized Employment	46%
Retention In Unsubsidized Employment	42%
Earn High School Diploma Or Equivalent	48%
Adult Citizenship Community Involvement	48%
Adult Family Management	90%
Participation In Interactive Literacy Activities	90%
Development Of Joint Literacy Activities	90%

All analysis conducted during the evaluation was undertaken with the intent of understanding what factors influenced program success as measured by the 4 aggregate performance indicators. The aggregate performance indicators used for the evaluation (and their associated aggregate goal levels) were numerically calculated as weighted averages of the 20 original indicators for 2002-2003.

EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

The evaluation of the state family literacy programs employed accepted scientific research methods, which were informed by the insight and the 100 years of education experience of the evaluation team. The evaluation involved collecting relevant program data using a variety of collection techniques, and analyzing the data using appropriate and valid statistical methods. Given the demand from legislatures, media and the public at large for increased educational performance and cost efficiencies of education programs, statistical validation of performance outcomes, while not universally performed in educational research, cannot be understated.

The evaluation of the Kentucky 2002-2003 Family Literacy programs was performed in three phases. The first phase involved an inventory of information available through the Council on Postsecondary Education on the population of family literacy programs in Kentucky, including completed grant applications and performance indicator reports for each county. An initial analysis of the performance indicators was undertaken to classify the programs in the 120 counties. During this analysis, two counties[7] were deemed unusable for the study due to issues with their performance indicator data.

Based on the inventory of information in the first phase, a data collection instrument was designed and administered (known as the *Electronic Survey for Administrators*, ESA) to the population of 118 counties with valid performance data. The instrument collected the minimal set of information from all programs required to complete the evaluation. The target audience of the email survey instrument was the family literacy program administrators in the 118 counties.

As part of the second phase, the ESA data was analyzed. The analysis produced some initial findings and defined a sampling design for selecting programs for the onsite visits to be held in the third phase. The analysis also identified 9 additional programs that were deemed unusable for the evaluation. The final sampling universe for the evaluation (the sampling frame) was defined as 109 programs. A set of 36 programs was selected at random for onsite visits based on a stratified sample design. An additional 4 programs, in the four most populous counties in the state were also selected for visits.

The program universe for the evaluation is presented in Table 2. All statistical analyses performed as part of the evaluation made inferences about, or described the traits of, the 109 programs in the universe, or subpopulations within the 109 programs.[8]

The third phase of the evaluation included preparing 5 additional data collection instruments, conducting interviews and administering the instruments, and analyzing the data using both quantitative and qualitative methods.

---

[7] Hickman County and Menifee County were excluded due to issues with performance indicator data.

[8] In certain cases, we report results for the 118 programs with valid performance data. Such results are clearly identified as corresponding to the 118.

Table 2 ~ Determination of Counties Eligible for Onsite Visits

Population	Count
All Counties	120
Less counties with invalid performance data[9]	2
Counties with Valid Performance Data	118
Less counties with new provider in 2003-2004	3
Less counties not responding to the ESA	1
Less counties with a new program administrator in '03-'04	5
Counties Eligible for an Onsite Visit (Universe)	109
Counties Selected at Random for an Onsite Visit	36
Selected Densely Populated Counties (nonrandom selection)	4
Non-selected Counties	69

The data collected from two of the instruments, the Teacher Onsite Survey (TOS) and the Adult Learner Survey (ALS), formed the sources of numerical data for use in identifying program factors associated with performance. (The entire set of instruments employed in the evaluation is described in Table 3.) The Teacher Onsite Survey (TOS) was developed as the core research tool to provide quantitative measures of family literacy program quality in Kentucky. The consulting team that developed the instruments had over 100 years of combined experience as educators, and more than 25 years as adult education professionals. The wealth of experience of the design team resulted in an instrument that was found to have good face validity and excellent internal reliability. Each section on the instrument was developed as a subscale to measure the quality of several program components, including instruction in adult education, parenting education, and PACT. The latter 3 sections/subscales were included in the TOS design with the intent of associating the scales with actual performance.

Notably, two of the instruments, the SFP and the COP, included information from the 2003-2004 programs. For that reason, findings about the 2002-2003 performance could not be developed from the data collected with these instruments. The SFP and COP information is presented in this report for completeness, but should be interpreted with care.

The final TOS instrument design was based on a review of the Kentucky performance indicator documentation, US DOE research into Even Start programs, other research studies, and the experience of the design team. The instrument was composed of 8 sections; 7 of which were designed as subscales measuring specific aspects of program quality. The eight sections were: *Respondent Personal Information, Facilities and Environment, Adult Education, Parenting Education, Integration of Components, PACT, Staff Development and Preparedness,* and *Enrollment and Administration.*

The quantitative analysis used a variety of valid methods to identify statistically significant

---

[9] The two counties were Hickman and Menifee.

associations, correlations, regression results, and differences in mean responses.[10] Such statistical information, when used to inform education policy, lessens the chance of irrelevant policy formation and improves the fiscal efficiency of the decision-making process. The quantitative research was bolstered by qualitative findings based on the information gathered in the field during the onsite visits.

Table 3 ~ Data Collection Instruments

Name	Type	Purpose	Administration
Electronic Survey for Administrators (ESA)	Un-timed, delivered in electronic media	Gather baseline design and administration data for all programs	Delivered to administrators via email during the second phase
Program Administrator Interview (AIP)	Open-ended interview questionnaire; document request list	Collect data missing on program application; follow up on email survey; gather additional information	TW+A staff recorded administrators responses and collected documentation
Teacher Onsite Survey (TOS)	Un-timed paper/pencil survey; 100% multiple choice questions	Collect first hand data on all components of family literacy; create a rating scale and subscales of program quality	Completed by instructors. TW+A consultants available to answer questions and provide instruction on completing survey
Adult Learner Survey (ALS)	Paper/pencil; 100% multiple choice questions	Collect data on student satisfaction and student motivations	Survey to be administered by mail or by TW+A staff during the program visits
Classroom Observation Protocol (COP)	Timed and un-timed observation instrument; multiple choice questions and observations	Collect first hand data by observing instruction, classroom facility, and instructional materials	Observations conducted by TW+A staff; instrument completed before, during and after each observed lesson
Site + Facility Protocol (SFP)	Un-timed observation instrument ; multiple choice questions and observations	Collect first hand data on the program site, location, and facility	Observations conducted by TW+A staff; collect additional site information by interviewing instructors

---

[10] Statistical tests used a 95% confidence level throughout, except where specifically noted. Where appropriate, the findings were developed using the probability weights associated with the sampling design.

PROGRAM BACKGROUND

State Program Requirements

In general, guidelines for family literacy programs throughout the nation are broad; they encourage flexibility in program design and scheduling. In 2002-03, Kentucky provided guidelines for family literacy programs while it gave each county the responsibility to structure the program to fit the needs and interests of its residents. In turn, each county was held accountable for meeting the performance goals established by the Kentucky Family Literacy Performance Indicators.

Family literacy grants were awarded by the DAEL through an RFP process. The grant to provide *Basic Adult Education and Family Literacy Services* included a Family Literacy Component and an Adult Education Component (ABE). Overlapping services between programs identified in the Scope of Work included[11]:

- The family literacy programs . . . provide parents with instruction in basic academic skills, life skills which include parenting skills, and employability skills (Adult Education and Parent Time components);

- The adult education programs . . . assist adults who are parents to obtain the educational skills necessary to become full partners in the educational development of their children.

The two programs were funded by the same state department and administered by the same county agent. Each program submitted a separate budget, personnel list, program design, and schedule on the grant application form. The adult education program, a consolidation of all ABE programs in each county, provided adult basic education to all qualified state residents through their regular ABE program or through family literacy providers, such as Even Start and the DAEL family literacy program. In most programs, adult education was provided by ABE and parenting and PACT were provided by family literacy; in some programs instructors provided both ABE services and parent education instruction and were funded by both family literacy and ABE. Some family literacy programs provided and funded their own adult education instruction.

State Performance Results

As part of the intake process in 2002-03, each program was required to assess adult learners to determine their academic level using an assessment instrument approved by DAEL. The programs were required to report performance results as outlined by the Kentucky Family Literacy Program Performance Indicators to document family and program progress. The programs had to use the State's on-line system to report accurate, up-to-date data within ten days of the event and to submit a final report by August of the program year.

---

[11] Kentucky Department for Adult Education & Literacy, Council on Postsecondary Education, "The Commonwealth of Kentucky Master Agreement," July 2002.

For the enrollment component, the State established an enrollment target for each county based on the number of people at low levels of literacy in the county. Targets for the adult education component identified the percent of adult learners enrolled for any of the 15 performance indicators who were required to reach their performance goal in order for the program goal to be met. Targets for parent education and PACT identified the percent of parents required to reach their performance goal for the program goal to be met.

Families were considered enrolled after they had 12 hours of service during which the adult was required to complete an initial assessment to determine his/her academic level. Of the 118 county programs with valid 2002-2003 performance data, 72 met their enrollment goal[12]; of the 40 counties visited, 23 met their county's enrollment goal.

During the 2002-2003 program year, there were 15 performance indicators for adult education achievement. Eleven of the 15 were academic content related and measured the adult basic education skill level of an enrollee. The target level of goal attainment for these 11 indicators ranged from 27% to 40% of the adult learners enrolled. There were over 3,000 adults in family literacy throughout the state working to attain an adult education goal. Just over 30% of the adults reached their ABE goal during 2002-03. On average across the state, enrollees met the adult education performance targets for these 3 indicators: *Beginning ABE Literacy Completions*; *Beginning ESL Completions*; and *Low Intermediate ESL Completions*.

The remaining 4 adult education performance indicators were employment or diploma related. Throughout the state, over 1,000 adults in family literacy had as a goal *Placement in Post Secondary Education/Training*, *Placement in Unsubsidized Employment*, *Retention in Unsubsidized Employment*, or *Earn High School Diploma or Recognized Equivalent*. Of that number, over 70% of the adults achieved their goal. The target level of goal attainment for these indicators ranged from 42% to 48% of enrollees in a county. On average, enrollees across the state met the targets for all of these 4 indicators.

These two components of adult education were aggregated as part of the evaluation methodology. Of the 118 counties with valid performance data, 57 met the aggregated adult education goal; 23 of the 40 counties in the sample group met their aggregate adult education goal.

The level of performance for the adult learner with respect to parenting related skills was measured with 4 indicators: *Adult Citizenship/Community Involvement*, *Adult Family Management*, *Participation in Interactive Literacy Activities*, and *Development of Joint Literacy Activities*. The required target level of performance was 90% for all 4 of these indicators. Across the state as a whole, adult learners failed to meet the goal attainment targets for all four indicators.

---

[12] Data on performance results was obtained from two Microsoft® Excel-based FY 2003 Family Literacy Final Performance Reports (one based on families and one on adult learner counts), and the FY 2003 Final Performance Report for each county, obtained from the Kentucky Adult Education, Council on Postsecondary Education.

Additionally, no individual counties in the state met the goal attainment targets for the first three of the indicators, which jointly measured parenting education skills. Of the 118 counties with valid data, only 4 met the goal target for the one indicator measuring PACT skills. For the 40 programs in the visited sample, only 1 met the target performance level for PACT.

Goal attainment results for child education and integration of program components were not available for this study.

As noted earlier, the 20 performance indicators were broadly grouped into 4 categories reflecting the components of a family literacy program: adult education, parenting education, parent and child together (PACT) instruction, and enrollment. The average percent goal achievement by the adult learners in each of the 4 categories is presented in Figure 2. On average state-wide the target level of achievement set by the DAEL for adult education was exceeded. In the three other categories, the targeted achievement level was not met, although the target level was nearly met for enrollment.

Figure 2 ~ State-wide Summary of Goal Achievement by Adult Learners
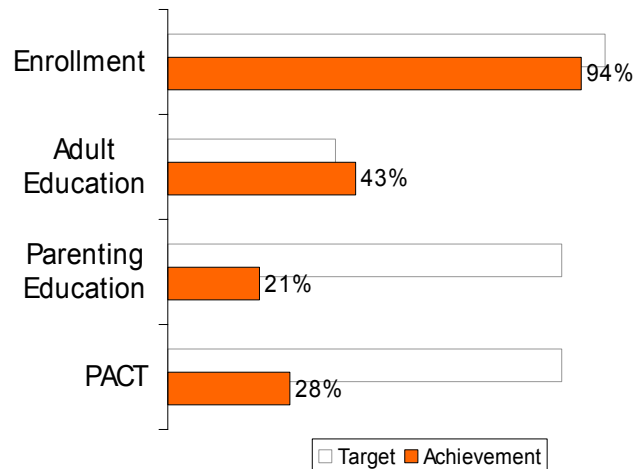
A DESCRIPTION OF THE PROGRAMS

2002-2003 Program Year Retrospective Information

The following sections review the information about the 2002-2003 programs collected during the period of the evaluation, and provide a description of the diversity of the program models in place during that year. A description of the instructors employed and the students enrolled in the programs is also presented.

High-level Input from the 2002-2003 Administrators

As of 2002-2003, there was a family literacy program in place in every county. Eleven of the counties did not meet the requirements for inclusion in the study. These requirements were i) that the 2003-2004 administrator was also in place during the 2002-2003 program year, and ii) that the program had a complete and valid set of 2002-2003 performance indicator results. Several administrators informed us through the ESA that they were new as of 2003-2004. One did not complete the survey and was treated as new and excluded from the study. This information is presented in Figure 3.

Figure 3 ~ Count of Programs by Inclusion in Evaluation
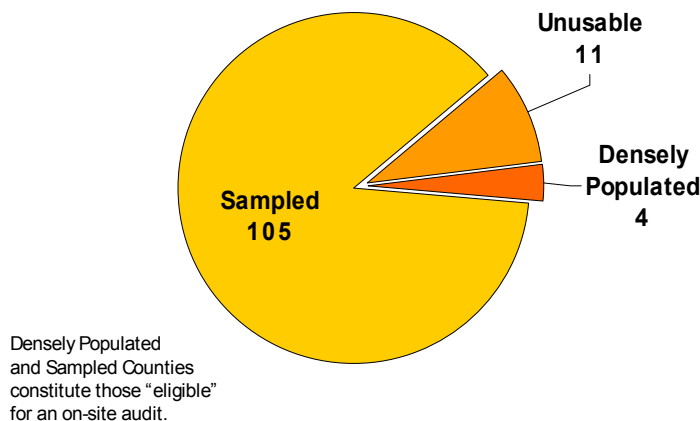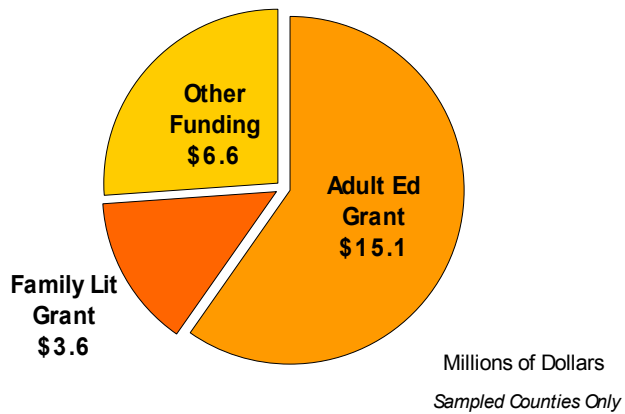

Based on the grant applications submitted by the programs, for every $1 requested under the Family Literacy Grant, the programs were using approximately $6 from other sources, including the Adult Education Basic Grant. Funding from sources other than state grant monies constituted about 25% of the total funds reportedly available to the programs. These data are shown in Figure 4.

Figure 4 ~ Sources of Funding Reported on the Grant Application

Other Funding $6.6

Adult Ed Grant $15.1

Family Lit Grant $3.6

Millions of Dollars

Sampled Counties Only

In addition to the grant application, the ESA provided broad information about each county's program model and the administrative practices. Administrators in nearly half of the programs (51 counties) indicated that they designed their programs to provide instruction for at least 48 weeks of the year. Two of the programs reported providing instruction for 4 weeks, and 20 weeks of the year. These data are presented in Figure 5.

Figure 5 ~ Weeks of Instruction

Number of Counties

51

22

23

7

2

< 36   36-39   40-43   44-47   48-52

Proposed Number of Weeks
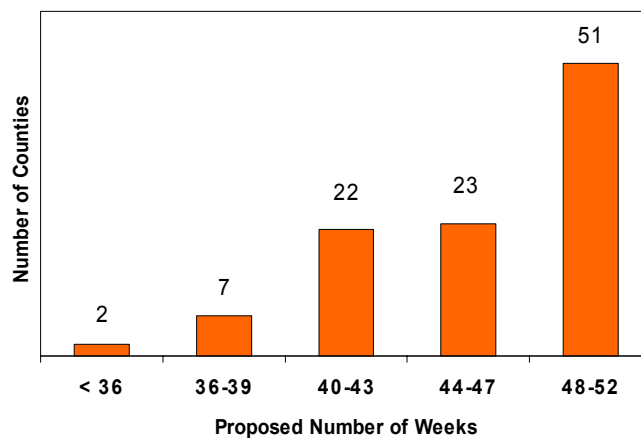
Of the 109 counties eligible for onsite visits, the majority (74%) used either collaborator referral (35 programs), outreach through schools (26 programs), or community outreach (20 programs) to recruit families to their programs as shown in Figure 6.

Figure 6 ~ Preferred Method of Recruitment
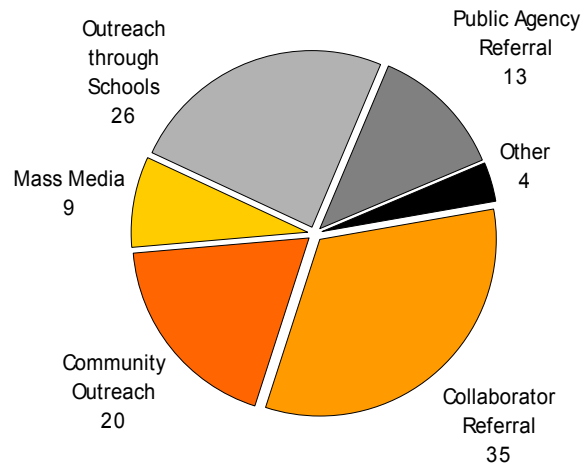
Less than 10% of the programs (10 programs), indicated that they required their instructional staff to attend more than 6 professional development activities during the 2002-2003 program year, as shown in Table 8. Notably, 93 programs (not shown) indicated that the State was the main provider of professional development in 2002-2003.

Figure 8 ~ Professional Development Activities
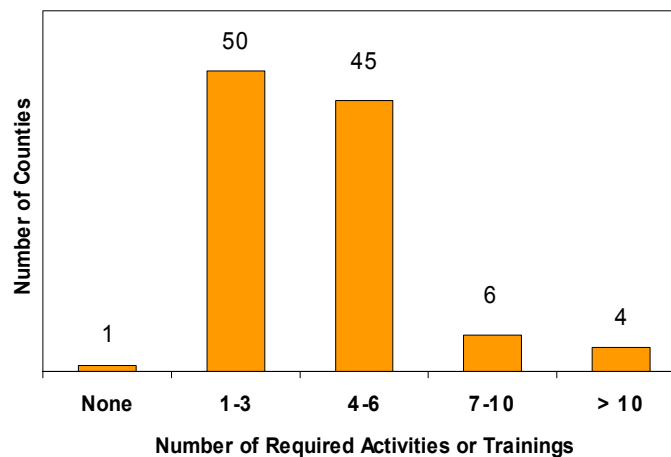
Administrators in 100 programs (not shown) indicated that they held regularly scheduled staff meetings. Figure 9 shows that nearly all of these programs (97) indicated that the adult education instructors attended these meetings.

Only 29 program administrators indicated that the instructors from the child's school attended [full staff family literacy] meetings.

Slightly more than half of the programs indicated that the parent education instructors (64 programs), the PACT instructors (63 programs), or the program administrator (63 programs) attended the meetings. Only 29 program administrators indicated that the instructors from the children's schools attended these meetings.

Figure 9 ~ Staff Meetings and Integration
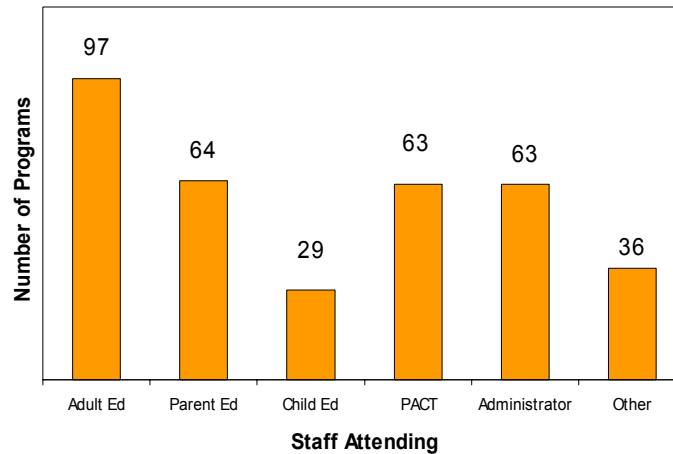
When asked about their sources of content for instruction for 2002-2003, more than 75% of the 109 programs indicated that they used parent inventories (85 programs), and more than 75% (85 programs) also indicated that they used family observations as sources for content. Nearly 61% of the programs indicated they used federal standards (66 programs) and 65% of the programs used pre-determined curricula (71%).

Figure 10 ~ Selected Sources of Content for Instruction
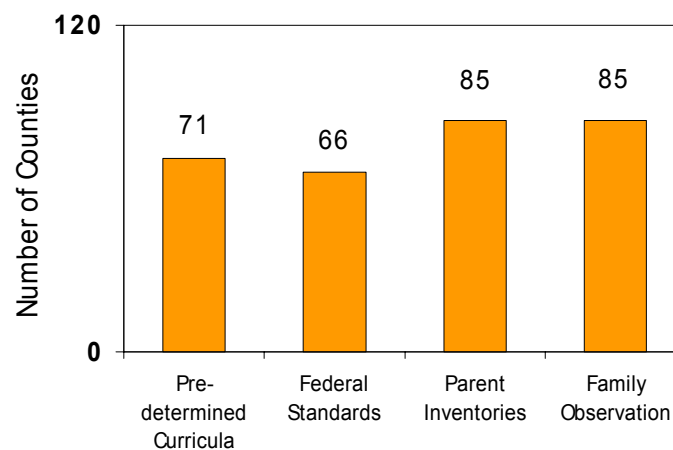
In 106 of the 109 (97%) eligible programs[13], there were 5,024 child learners reportedly enrolled during the 2002-2003 family literacy program year *as shown in Figure 11*. Approximately 50% of the students (2,391 children) were under the age of six. Roughly 20% of the students (1,098 children) were middle school (age 11-14) or high school age (age 15-18). Of the 106, 97 (92%) reported having some middle school- or high school-age children enrolled in their program (not shown).

Figure 11 ~ Child Learners in Kentucky Family Literacy
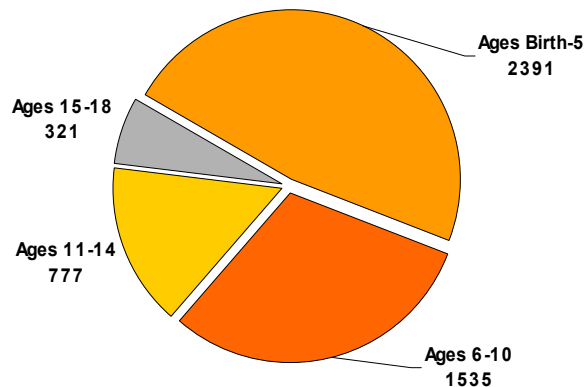
Administrators in 91 counties indicated that PACT instruction was their first choice for facilitating parent-child interaction as part of their program. The most common facilitation method stated as a second choice was homework (ten percent of the administrators indicated that homework was their first choice). These data are shown in Figure 12.

Figure 12 ~ How Programs Facilitate Parent-Child Interaction

---
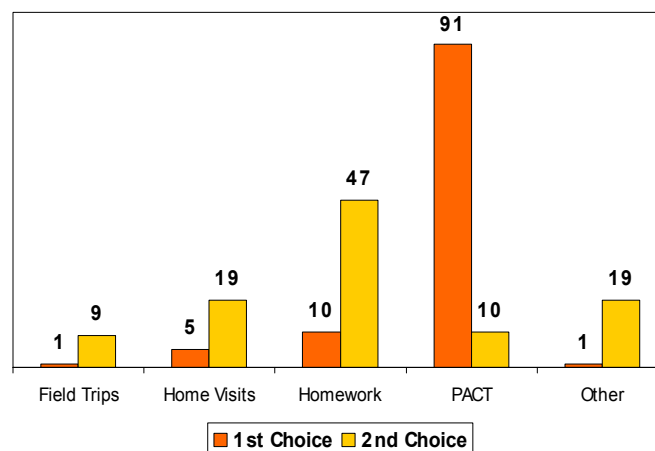
[13] Kenton and Russell counties had errors in the reported counts of children. Fleming had errors in the count of adults.

Roughly half of the administrators (57) reported that parents participated in an activity at their child's school once per month as part of their family literacy program, as shown in Figure 13. Nearly 10% percent of administrators indicated that parents attended an activity more than once per week.

Figure 13 ~ How Often Parent Attends Child's School

Roughly 75% of programs (81) indicated that they used multiple assessments of the parents throughout the program year. Nearly all (103) created individual education plans for the enrollees at the beginning of the program year and nearly all offered instruction during the morning (97), afternoon (91), and evening (89). A small number of administrators (8) indicated that their program offered instruction on the weekends.

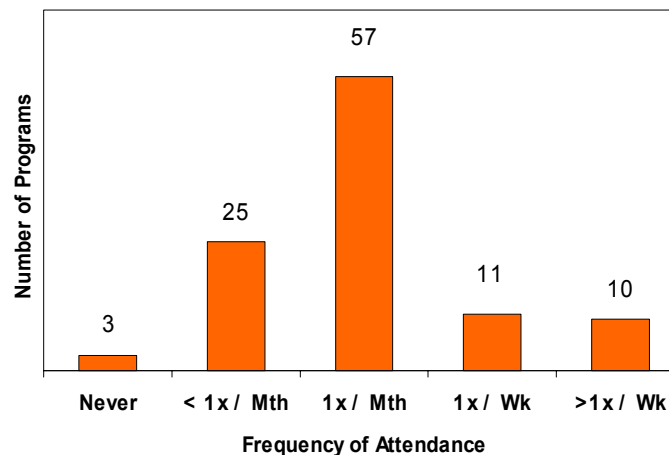## Reflections from the 2002-2003 Family Literacy Instructors

Instructors provided input into the evaluation through the Teacher Onsite Survey (TOS), which was developed as the primary research tool to provide quantitative measures of Family Literacy Program quality in Kentucky. The final instrument was composed of 103 individual items. The sections other than Section A, *Respondent Personal Information*, consisted of a total of 92 items that used a 1 to 5 Likert scale, which measured how well each item described the respondent's 2002-2003 family literacy program. The TOS for 2002-2003 was completed by 103 instructors[14]. The eight sections of the survey are described in Table 4.

---

[14] There were 23 staff respondents who completed the 2003-2004 edition; these responses have not been included in this report. There were no 2002-2003 TOS responses for the counties of Crittenden, Daviess, Henderson, Todd, and Whitley reported because, i) the county had all new staff for 2003-2004, or ii) the 2002-2003 staff were not available during the onsite visit, or iii) the staff did not return surveys provided them.

Table 4 ~ Structure of the Teacher Onsite Survey (TOS)

Section	Content	Items
A	Teacher Personal Information	11
B	Facilities and Environment	5
C	Adult Education	18
D	Parenting Education	27
E	Integration of Components	8
F	Parent and Child Together (PACT)	18
G	Staff Development	6
H	Enrollment and Administration	10

TEACHER PERSONAL INFORMATION

DAEL requires all program managers and instructors in DAEL-funded programs to have a minimum of a baccalaureate degree. Personnel hired before the enactment of this requirement have been "grandfathered" in. Table 5 identifies each item and gives the survey responses for Section A on the TOS.

Nearly fifty percent of the teachers had a Bachelor's degree in Education and 25 percent of that number had a Master's or Doctoral degree. For items related to teacher certification, about one fourth of the instructors indicated they held a certificate in adult education and /or family literacy and half that number were certified in early childhood education. In the majority of cases teachers indicated that certification was not required for employment. For program year 2002-2003, seventy four percent of the teachers completing the survey had teaching experience outside of family literacy. More than fifty percent of the teachers had responsibility for adult education, parenting, and PACT time.

Table 5 ~ Factors on the TOS (Section A), Teacher Personal Information

Item	During 2002-2003 …	Adult Education	Parenting Education	PACT
TA1	What classes did you teach in 2002-2003	73%	53%	58%
			Yes	No
TA2	You held a Master's or Doctoral degree		25%	75%
TA3	You held a Certificate or Credential in Adult Education		25%	73%
TA4	You held a Certificate in Family Literacy		28%	72%
TA5	You held a Certificate in Early Childhood Education		12%	88%
TA6	Your employment required you to be certified in Adult Education or Family Literacy		23%	77%
TA7	Your employment required you to be certified in Early Childhood Education		5%	95%
TA8	You had teaching experience outside Family Literacy		74%	26%
TA9	You held a Bachelor's in Education		48%	52%
TA10	You are bilingual		9%	91%

Item	During 2002-2003 …	< 1	1-2	3-5	6-10	11-15	> 15
TA11	How many years had you taught Family Literacy?	35%	32%	15%	9%	4%	5%

Responses related to years of teaching experience in family literacy showed that while less than 30 percent of the teachers were certified in family literacy, 18% of the teachers had taught in family literacy six years or longer. Sixty-seven percent of the teachers had been in the family literacy classroom one or two years.

FACILITIES AND ENVIRONMENT

The five items on Section B and the response rates are identified in Table 6 below[15].

Table 6 ~ Facilities and Environment (TOS Section B)

No.	Item	Described Program Well	Did Not Describe	N/A
TB1	Site felt safe	92%	4%	0%
TB2	Adequate parking	92%	8%	0%
TB3	Clean buildings and grounds	84%	16%	0%
TB4	Smoke-free environment	86%	12%	2%
TB5	Facilities appropriate and sufficient	86%	14%	0%

Teachers agreed that the teaching site was safe; parking was adequate; and the facilities were clean, well maintained, and smoke-free. A large percentage of teachers agreed that the site facilities were appropriate and sufficient for instruction.

ADULT EDUCATION

Items relating to the adult education component of family literacy are shown in Table 7. Responses indicated that the curriculum and teaching materials used reflected current adult education practice and were relevant to the adult learner's educational needs, lifestyles, and values.

Ninety (90%) percent of the instructors reported their program reinforced the connection between parents' literacy skills and the educational success of their children; 75% reported their program made connections to children's instructional programs. Respondents strongly agreed that their daily instructional schedule was flexible and had computers and other technologies and materials that addressed a wide range of literacy levels. Eighty-five (85%) percent reported their program gave periodic interim assessments using the same tool that was used at intake; 78% indicated students were placed in classes based on their assessed instructional level.

---

[15]   Respondents to the TOS were asked to report about their program on each TOS item using a 5 value Likert scale. The two highest scale values were "Item describes my program exactly" and "Item describes my program well". For purposes of reporting, these two scale values were collapsed together, and the percent of respondents selecting either value are reported here under the column labeled "Describes Program Well".

Table 7 ~ Adult Education (TOS Section C)

No.	Item	Described Program Well	Did Not Describe	N/A
TC1	Curriculum reflects current education research	89%	10%	1%
TC2	Content taught in functional context	90%	8%	2%
TC3	Materials reflect learners lifestyles	86%	13%	1%
TC4	Computers and technologies assisted instruction	91%	8%	1%
TC5	Materials on different literacy levels	95%	4%	1%
TC6	Variety of format for materials	81%	17%	2%
TC7	Career, education and job skills education	91%	8%	1%
TC8	Transitional aid to employment and education	86%	13%	1%
TC9	Connecting parent literacy and child success	90%	7%	3%
TC10	Connections to children's instruction	75%	19%	5%
TC11	Content integration with other programs	87%	12%	1%
TC12	Flexibility in daily instruction	98%	1%	1%
TC13	Dialogue and mentoring opportunities	92%	8%	1%
TC14	Instruction relevant to daily life	87%	12%	1%
TC15	Computer as resource tool	81%	17%	2%
TC16	Given periodic interim assessments	85%	13%	2%
TC17	Class placement based on assessed levels	78%	18%	5%
TC18	Regular instruction for long term retention	89%	10%	1%

PARENTING EDUCATION

Instructors were asked to respond to 27 items related to parenting education as shown in Table 8.

Sixty percent (60%) of teachers stated that their programs offered parenting education classes separate from adult education and PACT instruction. About 80% reported that their programs provided frequent opportunities for parents to practice adult literacy skills, showed parents the value of parent involvement in the literacy development of their children and included instruction on parenting activities to develop and support their children's literacy development.

Over three-fourths of the teachers said their curriculum materials included children's books, games and educational toys and two-thirds reported using newspapers, magazines and parenting manuals regularly. Interestingly, over 70% said they used arts and crafts, but only 37% reported the use of music or musical instruments as instructional materials.

Almost three-fourths of the teachers said they used a variety of instructional strategies, including lectures, role-playing, and group work and included planned opportunities for parents to share experiences and support each other.

A large majority of teachers stated their programs included topics on child rearing, discipline, positive behavior management and instruction in management of health issues and family financial well-being. Three-fourths provided instruction on the use of community resources such as libraries, health programs, and emergency services with slightly fewer providing guidance on setting appropriate expectations for children's learning and development. As part of the parenting education

curriculum, somewhat less than two-thirds indicated that instruction on the use of computers and other technologies to assist in children's learning was characteristic of their program.

Table 8 ~ Parenting Education (TOS Section D)

No.	Item	Described Program Well	Did Not Describe	N/A
TD1	Various topics on raising children	76%	11%	12%
TD2	Content supported children's literacy development	81%	8%	11%
TD3	Partnerships between parent and schools	68%	20%	11%
TD4	Development of child literacy skills	80%	10%	10%
TD5	Variety of instructional strategies	71%	19%	9%
TD6	Parents share and support each other	73%	17%	9%
TD7	Use of newspapers and magazines	66%	23%	10%
TD8	Use of parenting manuals	65%	25%	10%
TD9	Use of games and educational toys	76%	12%	11%
TD10	Use of arts and crafts materials	71%	18%	10%
TD11	Parent classes separate from adult ed and PACT	60%	26%	13%
TD12	Computer instruction to assist children's learning	63%	26%	11%
TD13	Practice of adult literacy skills	83%	7%	9%
TD14	Use of music and/or musical instruments	37%	46%	15%
TD15	Use of children's books	79%	10%	11%
TD16	Regular assignments to practice new parent skills	65%	24%	11%
TD17	Setting appropriate expectations	73%	14%	12%
TD18	Learning the use of community resources	75%	14%	10%
TD19	Parents attend 4 or more school events	66%	19%	14%
TD20	Instruction in health and finance	71%	17%	11%
TD21	Involvement in planning topics and activities	69%	20%	11%
TD22	Learning value of parent involvement	79%	13%	8%
TD23	Learners came with existing skills and strengths	53%	35%	11%
TD24	Tracking own progress	57%	32%	10%
TD25	Report on out-of-school assignments	47%	37%	16%
TD26	Sufficient instruction to ensure retention	65%	25%	9%
TD27	High rate of attendance	53%	34%	12%

Over two-thirds of the teachers reported the frequent use of activities to build effective partnerships between parents and schools and requiring parent attendance at four or more meetings or events at their children's school during the program year. However, slightly less than two-thirds reported giving regular assignments for practicing new parenting skills at home and in the community and less than half asked parents to report on school assignments carried out away from the program site.

More than two-thirds said their programs involved parents in planning topics and activities related to their interests and needs, but only 57% reported that parents assisted in tracking their own progress toward achieving their goals. Almost two-thirds said parents were given enough instruction on a regular basis to ensure learning was retained in the long term.

Slightly more than one-half (53%) of the teachers reported that their parents came to the program with a variety of existing skills and existing strengths upon which to scaffold new learning or had a high rate of attendance in the parenting education classes.

INTEGRATION OF COMPONENTS

The teachers responding to the survey were asked to respond to eight statements designed to measure the integration of the components of their programs. The items are identified in Table 9.

Three-fourths of the teachers reported that paid time was provided on a regular and frequent basis for all staff to meet, plan, and identify common messages to communicate to adult learners.

Table 9 ~ Integration of Components (TOS Section E)

No.	Item	Described Program Well	Did Not Describe	N/A
TE1	Involvement of community partners	68%	30%	2%
TE2	Classroom teacher and PACT instructor meet	47%	34%	18%
TE3	Regular staff meetings	67%	30%	3%
TE4	Community partner in instruction	64%	22%	13%
TE5	Paid time for meetings	76%	18%	5%
TE6	Meeting scheduled in advance	64%	31%	4%
TE7	Collaborators given training	37%	32%	30%
TE8	Identifying common messages	73%	20%	6%

Over two-thirds said the entire staff usually met at least once every two weeks for program and instructional planning, while slightly fewer said the meetings were scheduled well in advance. Over two-thirds said adult education included the scheduled involvement of community partners in the delivery of instruction; slightly fewer said community partners were involved in parenting education instruction and delivery on a planned basis.

Less than half reported that regular meetings occurred between the regular classroom teacher of the children and the PACT instructor. Approximately one-third said that collaborators who provided direct services were given training in family literacy.

PARENT AND CHILD TOGETHER (PACT)

Table 10 shows the 18 items in Section F related to PACT. In general, the teachers completing the survey felt the PACT component of the program contained a wide variety of opportunities for parents and children to share experiences. Teachers also stated PACT activities took into account the child's skill level and interests and strongly engaged the parent.

There is evidence that PACT performance success is attributable to instructor and parent planning, scheduling together, and managing parent and child ratios during activity time.

PACT teachers structured time to allow children to express themselves and to give parents time with their child/children to complete homework. The class structure also allowed parents to practice skills learned in parenting classes. The survey responses suggested the need for:
- Parents and children to write more together
- More reading together on a regular basis

- Additional PACT time each week
- Increased family-centered activities

Table 10 ~ Parent and Child Together (TOS Section F)

No.	Item	Described Program Well	Did Not Describe	N/A
TF1	Wide variety of interactive experiences	78%	10%	12%
TF2	Set schedule for PACT weekly	63%	23%	13%
TF3	Parents reading, playing, talking to children	75%	11%	14%
TF4	PACT time in a variety of places	45%	37%	17%
TF5	Different activities for different age children	48%	32%	19%
TF6	Activities adjusted to interest and skill levels	74%	13%	13%
TF7	Activities at child's school	43%	38%	20%
TF8	Time for instructors to plan together	72%	11%	16%
TF9	Manageable adult-child ratio	70%	19%	11%
TF10	More than four hours of PACT time each week	37%	41%	20%
TF11	Parent and children journal together	42%	34%	23%
TF12	Opportunities for children to express themselves	72%	14%	14%
TF13	Parents help with homework	65%	20%	15%
TF14	Use of objects found at home	68%	18%	14%
TF15	Parent and children read to each other	79%	7%	13%
TF16	Parents practice parenting skills	70%	15%	15%
TF17	Parents discuss on PACT experiences	65%	18%	16%
TF18	Family-centered activities for whole family	59%	24%	16%

STAFF DEVELOPMENT AND PREPAREDNESS

Items related to staff development are identified in Table 11. Additional staff development initiatives could be implemented for the Kentucky family literacy program. Teachers indicated staff development was part of their employment; however, their responses may suggest the need for improvement.

Table 11 ~ Staff Development and Preparedness (TOS Section G)

No.	Item	Described Program Well	Did Not Describe	N/A
TG1	Systematic staff development	80%	15%	5%
TG2	Training in working with partners	65%	24%	10%
TG3	Relevant staff development topics	70%	25%	4%
TG4	Participation in development was required	86%	7%	7%
TG5	Integration of instruction across components	76%	19%	5%
TG6	Family literacy and adult education differences	71%	21%	8%

ENROLLMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

It was evident from responses shown on Table 12, that adult learners were assessed at the time they enrolled in the family literacy program. This helped staff to tailor academic experiences to individual needs.

Eighty eight (88%) of teachers reported taking attendance for each class and reporting that on student records. Usually one person managed attendance, student tracking, and reporting on student records.

Eighty (80%) of teachers responded that the program raised community awareness concerning family literacy and children's educational success in school. That same percentage stated their supervisor was easy to work with, readily accessible, and teacher roles and responsibilities were well defined.

Two areas, in this category that may need further improvement are student retention and annual staff turnover.

Not surprisingly, teachers and administrators are working together in planning, implementing, and assessing their local program in order to reach Kentucky's desired family literacy outcomes.

Table 12 ~ Enrollment and Administration (TOS Section H)

No.	Item	Described Program Well	Did Not Describe	N/A
TH1	Supervisor easy to work with	80%	18%	2%
TH2	Well-defined intake process	79%	17%	4%
TH3	One person for tracking records	68%	26%	5%
TH4	Attendance at every class	88%	9%	3%
TH5	Turnover rate low	84%	10%	6%
TH6	Student retention high	49%	47%	4%
TH7	Recruitment to specific populations	77%	17%	5%
TH8	Adult learners assessed	94%	4%	2%
TH9	Parent literacy and child success linked	78%	17%	4%
TH10	Roles and responsibilities well defined	80%	17%	3%

2002-2003 Year Observations from the Adult Learners

Adult learners gave input to the study through responses on the Adult Learner Survey (ALS). The ALS was developed as a secondary tool to provide quantitative measures of family literacy program quality in Kentucky; it was also developed based on experience of the consulting team and published research about family literacy. The final instrument was composed of 17 individual items, 16 of which were "yes or no" choice questions.

The survey was completed by 105 adult learners, 67 onsite and 38 via mail. The

expectation was to receive approximately 120 surveys, three from each site. Of the 105 received, 102 surveys were complete and usable for the study. Thirty-six of the 40 counties in the sample were represented. Counties that did not participate in the ALS survey were Mercer, Robertson, Todd, and Webster. Table 13 presents feedback from the adult learners who responded to the ALS.

All adult learners indicated they looked forward to attending each class. As reported in the Teacher Onsite Survey (TOS), the adult students agreed with the teachers that the class location was safe, easily accessible, and was located in a neat and clean facility.

> *Responses by the 102 adult learners surveyed indicated they had a positive academic experience. Nearly every adult learner reported making improvement in his or her reading, writing, and math skills during the program year.*

A very high percentage of parents were pleased with the class time devoted to parenting activities and the opportunity to share experiences with other adults. Parenting skills were also meaningful as adult students utilized these "learned skills" with their children in class.

Table 13 ~ Factors Reported by Adult Learners for 2002-2003

Item	Factors	Responses		
		1 child	**2 children**	**3+ children**
AL1	How many children did you have in the program? *(12% did not respond to the question)*	42%	30%	16%
		Yes	**No**	**N/A**
AL2	Improvement in academic skills	92%	3%	5%
AL3	Increase community involvement	50%	25%	24%
AL4	Practice parenting skills every week	75%	13%	11%
AL5	Student plan topics for class	62%	27%	8%
AL6	Time for parent collaboration	90%	5%	5%
AL7	Recommend family literacy	96%	3%	1%
AL8	Topics include personal finances or health issues	60%	21%	17%
AL9	Site of classes safe	97%	1%	2%
AL10	Site easy to get to	95%	2%	3%
AL11	Site/building clean	99%	0%	1%
AL12	Better able to understand own child's learning	68%	14%	18%
AL13	Transportation ever provided	49%	21%	28%
AL14	Personal enjoyment	96%	3%	0%
AL15	Own child indicated enjoyment	79%	2%	18%
AL16	Program provide or find childcare	61%	10%	27%

Responses by the 102 adult learners indicated a positive experience in the academic aspects of the program. Nearly every adult learner stated improvement in his or her reading, writing and math skills during the program year.

Almost half the parents without transportation or who expressed a need for a "ride to class" stated that the program did assist with helping them get to the program. A third of the respondents indicated that transportation was not an issue.

The adult learners' responses were generally positive; however, the following factors were less positive:

- Involvement of parents in planning topics for discussion
- Help with family finances and health-related activities
- Help parents better understand what their child/children are learning at school
- Provide or help find childcare services when needed by families enrolled in the program

Satisfaction with the family literacy program was very evident. The adult student survey respondents expressed they would recommend the family literacy program to other families in their community.

Adult learners from the family literacy programs were asked their reasons for choosing a family literacy program over an adult education program. As Table 14 indicates the responses selected show a range of reasons. Six out of every ten adult learners selected the family literacy classes rather than the local adult education program because they wanted their child/children to be with them in an education environment. They also indicated that family literacy classes were "easy for me to get to." Almost all said their children wanted to attend and told the parent they had fun in the program.

Table 14~ Factors Considered by Parents in Selecting Family Literacy Program

AL17   Why did you choose a family literacy program instead of an adult education program?

I didn't know there were adult education classes I could go to.	15%
It was easy for me to get to the family literacy classes.	61%
My children could be in the family literacy program with me.	75%
There were more classes to take in the family literacy program.	41%
Someone I knew told me about the family literacy program.	53%
I wanted to learn new parenting skills.	65%
I was required by an outside agency to go to a parenting class.	8%
My children wanted to be in the family literacy program.	97%

Detailed Interview Comments from the Administrators

During the onsite interviews, administrators' comments were captured through a scripted instrument, the Administrator Interview Protocol (AIP). Administrators were asked to identify factors they regarded as barriers or drivers of program enrollment; two factors received sufficient mention to merit noting.

Of the 40 administrators interviewed, 30% said transportation was a barrier to enrollment and 60% said collaboration with other agencies was a driver due to the agencies' providing referrals for enrollment.

Other barriers mentioned more than once included the newness of the program (17.5%), childcare (15%), and recruitment (10%). The only driver besides collaboration that was identified by more than one administrator was community resources (7.5%).

Identified barriers tended to cluster around issues related to staff, logistics, and the community. Staff issues included lack of experience and commitment of instructors, major changes in personnel, and insufficient professional staff development. Issues involving logistics included the inadequacy of the program site and problems with scheduling. Issues related to the community involved the lack of commitment to education, the community's distrust of the program, cultural issues, and the community's insularity.

Identified drivers clustered around collaboration with other agencies, student incentives, and staff experience. Collaboration was viewed as driving enrollment because collaborators referred students to the program. Student incentives such as free computers, field trips, and free movies were cited as enrollment drivers as was having an experienced staff.

Administrators were also asked to identify barriers and drivers of PACT and parenting education. Identified barriers included transportation (22.5%), reporting (22.5%), recruitment (15%), newness of the program (10%), childcare (7.5%), and lack of collaboration (7.5%). Identified drivers included collaboration (12.5%), community resources (5%), childcare (2.5%), and reporting (2.5%).

Administrators' responses again tended to cluster around common themes. Identified barriers clustered around staff, logistics and recruitment issues. Specifically mentioned were the lack of staff preparedness and professional development, a lack of quality volunteers, changes in staff, and administration and management. Barriers pertaining to logistics included computer system problems and sharing the room with other classes.

Identified drivers clustered around incentives, program location, and staff. Incentives such as free computers and door prizes were cited as drivers for PACT and parenting education as was having the program located in a mall and providing flexible scheduling. Instructor interest and a committed staff were specifically singled out as drivers.

To gauge the success of the Family Literacy programs in meeting student needs, TW+A asked each administrator to estimate the percent of students who left the program before completion. In response, 55% of the administrators reported an attrition rate of less than 30%. Specifically, 22.5% reported an attrition rate of less than 10%, 17.5% reported an attrition rate of less than 20%, and 15% reported an attrition rate of less than 30%.

Observational Data from 2003-2004 Programs

The classroom observations were made during the 2003-2004 program year. As such, they do not directly reflect the reported performance data for the 2002-2003 year. The reader is cautioned about identifying associations between the classroom observation and the performance. The observation data is reported for descriptive purposes only.

Classroom Observation Protocol (COP)

The TW+A site visitation team observed 30 classes as they visited the 40 sites during the spring of the 2003-2004 program year. The Classroom Observation Protocol (COP) process provided the site team member with the opportunity to note and record the use of materials and to observe the instructional environment.

Parenting class observations involved 21 sites (70% of the 30 programs). PACT comprised 17% and adult education classes 13% of the classrooms observed.

Class size for adult attendees ranged from one adult to 43 adult students. Sixty percent of the classes had four or fewer adults and 33% of the classes had between five and ten parents. One class size was reported at 43 adults attending. Children in a family literacy class with their parents ranged from one to 31. Of the five classes observed with children, 80% had five or fewer children.

Instructional organization was generally whole group (69%). Eleven percent of the time was devoted to students working alone and an equal amount of time was given to parents and children working, playing, and learning together. Classroom activity also involved individual student presentations and role-playing.

The site visitation team spent approximately 49 minutes in each of the 30 classrooms. Team members reported high engagement in classes by adults (75% of class time) and an even higher percentage (78%) by children in the five PACT classes.

Instructional time by teachers accounted for 58% of class activities through telling, lecturing, modeling and interactive activities involving questioning and answering. Teachers facilitated instruction by coaching and giving personal assistance to students while spending only 2% of their time managing behavior, material distribution and other disruptions.

All 30 sites had sufficient lighting in classrooms, furniture was adequate for parents and children, and classrooms were clean and not littered. One-half of the parent education classrooms had reference materials and newspapers and two-thirds had computers available for use by adults. Eight of the 30 programs had computers that were accessible for use by children.

Overall, the COP process showed high adult learner involvement in the classroom; in the PACT class; children were fully engaged with their parents in the learning environment.

Site Facility Protocol (SFP)

After each site visitation, members of the TW+A visitation team completed a site observation form. The document was completed during or shortly after being onsite and meeting with family literacy instructional staff.

The onsite consultants summarized twenty-two program factors in the following areas:

- Site and Location Observation
- Facility Observation
- Site and Facility Audit Questions

More than two-thirds of the program sites were located in residential areas that may not require public transportation. In fact, 74 percent of the local sites were not accessible via public transportation.

Half of the programs were located on the campus of a public school with the remainder in a community or municipal structure. Only 10% of the instructional sites were in portable or mobile buildings. In most cases the administrator's office was located in the same building or near the family literacy classrooms.

Personal observations gave evidence of facilities being identifiable, having internet access, being climate controlled, clean, well maintained, secure, handicap accessible and with adequate and clean restroom facilities.

FINDINGS

In order to identify factors influencing the success of Kentucky's Family Literacy programs in meeting their aggregate adult education, parent education, PACT, and enrollment performance indicator targets, TW+A examined responses to the Teacher On Site (TOS) survey and the Adult Learner Survey (ALS). The responses from the TOS represent the instructors' description and the evaluation of the quality of the 2002-2003 family literacy programs. The responses to the ALS represent the adult learner perspective on program quality. Item responses from these surveys were analyzed to identify whether the responses were statistically associated with the level of goal attainment for each of the four indicators.

Administrators' ESA Responses About the 2002-2003 Programs

An analysis of the content sources used in program design found a strong association between the use of a wide variety of sources and attainment of the performance goals. Specifically, programs with curricula that were designed based on at least three of the following four content sources, federal standards; pre-determined curricula; parent interest inventories; and family observations, exhibited significantly higher achievement on all performance indicators.

Instructors' Retrospective Evaluation of the 2002-2003 Program

The instructors reported their experiences in the 2002-2003 programs through responses to the TOS. These responses are reported below with the findings organized by the sections on the instrument.

Facilities and Environment

There were no items from the *Facilities and Environment* section that displayed a significant association with program performance.
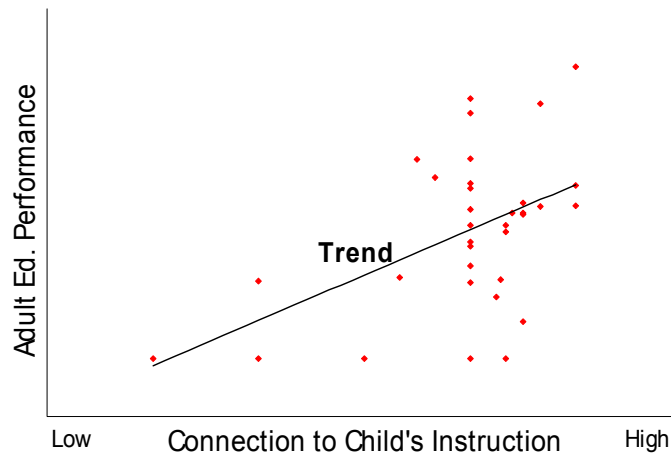
Adult Education

Five of the eighteen items in the TOS *Adult Education* section showed significant association with the attainment of adult education performance indicator targets. (Figure 15 illustrates the significant relationship between one item, connections to children's instruction, and achievement in adult education.) The five items were:

- Adult academic content was taught in a functional context;
- Instructional materials addressed a wide range of literacy levels;
- Connections were made to children's instructional program;
- Adult learners were given periodic interim assessments using the same tool as was used at intake; and,
- Adult learners were placed in classes based on their assessed instructional level.

Only one item in the TOS *Adult Education* section had any association with parenting education goal attainment. This item, "The use of computers and other technologies to assist in delivering adult classroom instruction", showed significant association with the programs' performance in meeting their Parenting Education goals as shown in Figure 15.

Figure 15 ~ Connectedness to Children's Instruction
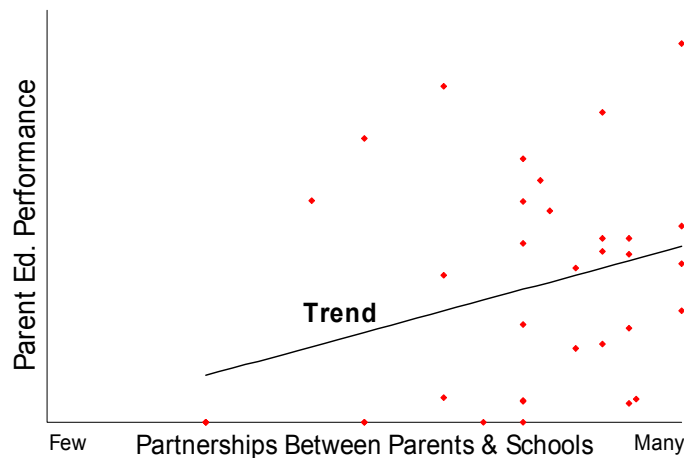

Four items in the *Adult Education* section exhibited significant association with PACT goal attainment. The four items were:

- The curriculum reflected current adult education research;
- Adult academic content was taught in a functional context;
- Computers and other technologies were used to assist in delivering adult classroom instruction; and,
- Adult learners were given periodic interim assessments using the same tool as was used at intake.

One item in the *Adult Education* section showed significant association with program performance relative to meeting enrollment goals: "Connections were made to children's instructional program."

Parenting Education

The *Parenting Education* section of the TOS was composed of twenty-seven (27) items. A large number of the individual 27 items from the *Parenting Education* section of the TOS were associated with goal attainment on at least one of the four program performance indicators as shown in Figure 16. Of the 27 items, 18 were significantly associated with at least one of the performance indicators.

Figure 16 ~ Activities to Build Partnerships between Parents & Schools

Seven of the 27 items in the *Parenting Education* section showed significant association with the programs' performance in meeting their adult education goals:
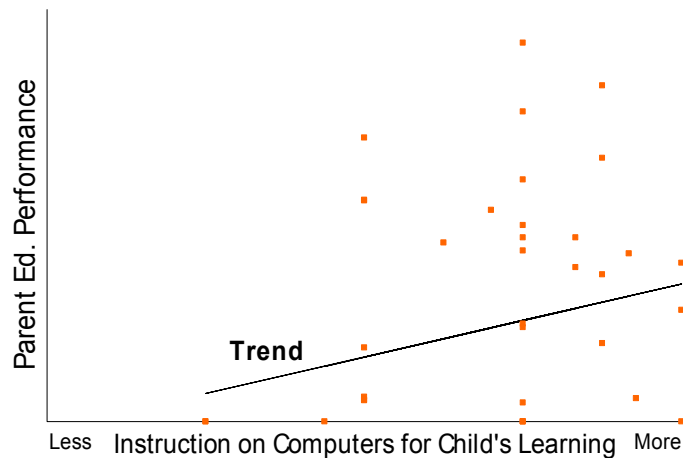
- Frequent activities to build effective partnerships between parents and schools;

- The regular use of newspapers and magazine as instructional materials;

- The regular use of parenting manuals (texts) as instructional materials;

- Instruction on the use of computers and other technologies to assist in children's learning;

- Instruction on the use of community resources such as libraries, health programs, and emergency services;

- Parents [came to the program] with a variety of existing skills and existing strengths upon which to scaffold new learning; and,

- Parents were given enough instruction on a regular basis to ensure learning was retained in the long-term.

Eleven of the twenty-seven items showed significant association with programs' performance in meeting their parenting education goals. One of these items, instruction on the use of computers, is illustrated in Figure 17. Another item, sufficient instruction for learning retention, is illustrated in Figure 18. The eleven items are:

- Frequent activities to build effective partnerships between parents and schools;

- Planned opportunities for parents to share experiences and support each other;

- Parenting classes were usually offered as classes separate from adult education and PACT;

- Instruction on the use of computers and other technologies to assist in children's learning;

- The regular use of music and/or musical instruments as instructional materials;

- Instruction on the use of community resources such as libraries, health programs, and emergency services;

- Parent attendance at four or more meetings or events at their child's school during the program year;

- Parents were involved in planning topics and activities related to their interests and needs;

- Parents [came to the program] with a variety of existing skills and existing strengths upon which to scaffold new learning;

- Parents assisted in tracking their own progress towards achieving their goals; and,

- Parents were given enough instruction on a regular basis to ensure learning was retained in the long-term.

Figure 17 ~ Instruction to Adults on Use of Computers to Assist Child's Learning

Figure 18 ~ Was Instruction Sufficient to Ensure Learning Was Retained by Adults?

Seven of the items demonstrated significant association with the programs' performance in meeting their PACT goals:

- Frequent activities to build effective partnerships between parents and schools;

- Instruction on the use of computers and other technologies to assist in children's learning;

- The regular use of music and/or musical instruments as instructional materials;

- Instruction on the use of community resources such as libraries, health programs, and emergency services;

- Parent attendance at four or more meetings or events at their child's school during the program year;

- Parents [came to the program] with a variety of existing skills and existing strengths upon which to scaffold new learning; and,

- Parents were given enough instruction on a regular basis to ensure learning was retained in the long-term.

Finally, eleven of the twenty-seven items showed significant association with the programs' performance in meeting their enrollment goals:

- Topics such as child rearing, discipline, and positive behavior management;

- Frequent activities to build effective partnerships between parents and schools;

- Instruction on parenting activities that develop a child's literacy skills;

- A variety of instructional strategies such as lectures, role-playing, and group work;

- Planned opportunities for parents to share experiences and support each other;

- The regular use of newspapers and magazines as instructional materials;

- Parenting classes that were usually offered as classes separate from adult education and PACT;

- Regular assignments for practicing new parenting skills at home and in the community;

- Parent attendance at four or more meetings or events at their child's school during the program year;

- Instruction in management of health issues and family financial well-being; and,

- Parents [came to the program] with a variety of existing skills and existing strengths upon which to scaffold new learning.

In looking across all four performance areas, two items in the TOS *Parenting Education* section showed significant positive association with all four performance indicators:

- Frequent activities to build effective partnerships between parents and schools; and,

- Parents [came to the program] with a variety of existing skills and existing strengths upon which to scaffold new learning.

It is notable that the first item above speaks to collaboration of the family literacy program with the children's schools. During the onsite interviews, *more than* one half (24 out of 40) of the program administrators noted the importance of collaboration as a driver of their program's success[16]. One administrator with a program in its first year noted:

> *"For our students, [our focus] was to get them involved in the children's education while working on their own education."*

The TOS item regarding existing parent skills is noteworthy. A report on Even Start sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education[17] (US DOE) cited a warning sign for problems within parenting education instruction as, "staff do not believe that parents have existing skills and strengths upon which to build," which was the basis for the corresponding TOS item. The results from the corresponding TOS item may suggest that, to the extent instructors identify the existing skills of adult learners, performance in parenting education is positively affected.

Integration

The *Integration of Components* section of the TOS was composed of eight (8) items. Two of the eight items in the TOS *Integration of Components* section showed significant association with programs' performance in meeting their adult education goals:

- Adult education included the scheduled involvement of community partners in the delivery of instruction; and,
- All family literacy staff met to identify common messages to communicate to adult learners.

Two of the eight items showed significant association with programs' performance in meeting their parenting education goals:

- Community partners were involved in parenting education instruction and delivery on a planned basis; and again,
- All family literacy staff met to identify common messages to communicate to adult learners.

These same two items were also significantly associated with performance in meeting PACT goals. Figure 18 presents the estimated association between the scheduled involvement of community partners in instruction delivery and the adult education performance achievement.

---

[16]   Based on the information provided for item 1.2 from the Administrator Interview Protocol (AIP).

[17]   RMC Research Corporation. (2001, June). *Guide to Quality: Even Start Family Literacy Program, Volume 1 (revised).* Manuscript submitted for publication. 48-51.

Figure 18 ~ Adult Education Included Scheduled Involvement of Partners

---
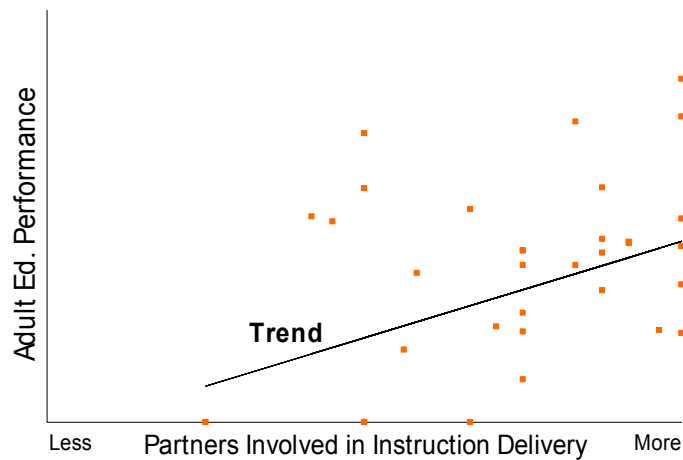
Only one item in the TOS *Integration of Components* section showed significant positive association with programs' performance in meeting their enrollment goals: "All family literacy staff met to identify common messages to communicate to adult learners."

In fact, this last item in the *Integration of Components* section shows significant association with all four of the performance areas of adult education, parenting education, PACT, and enrollment. The US DOE sponsored report[18] cited identification of common messages as a hallmark of quality integration in family literacy programs. One administrator (from a program where teachers indicated on the TOS that the staff met to identify messages) said that the "*need for literacy [was] emphasized*" as a message.
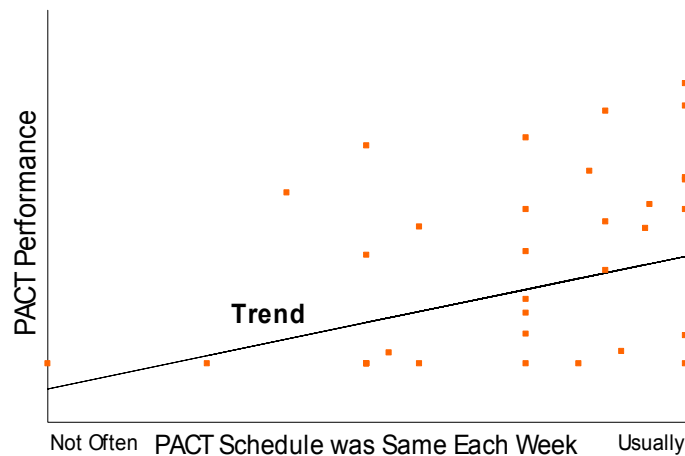
PACT

The PACT section of the TOS was composed of eighteen (18) items. Three of the individual eighteen items in the TOS PACT section showed significant association with three or more of the four performance indicators:

- A set schedule for PACT time that was the same from week to week;
- PACT, on average, included participation in more than four hours of PACT time each week; and,
- Planned PACT activities provided opportunities for parents and children to journal together.

Figure 19 presents the estimated association between PACT scheduling and PACT performance.

---

18   RMC Research Corporation. 26-28.

Figure 19 ~ A Set Schedule for PACT from Week to Week

Eight of the eighteen items showed significant positive association with programs' performance in meeting their enrollment goals:

- Included a wide variety of parent-child interactive experiences;

- A set schedule for PACT time that was the same from week to week;

- PACT activities that were adjusted to children's interests and skill levels;

- PACT time for school-aged children that took place at the child's school or other sites;

- On average, participation in more than four hours of PACT time each week;

- Opportunities for parents and children to journal together;

- Opportunities for parents to discuss and reflect on their PACT time experiences; and,

- Opportunities for family-centered activities that included both the immediate family and the extended family.

> *Notably, [journaling] is one measure of the extent of the literacy focus in the programs. Inasmuch as journaling represents a literacy focus, this result recommends the development of a literacy-focused PACT component in all programs as a means to drive achievement of performance goals.*

The item, "Planned PACT activities provided opportunities for parents and children to journal together," was significantly associated with all four performance areas of adult education, parenting education, PACT, and enrollment. Notably, this item is one measure of the extent of the literacy focus in the programs. Inasmuch as journaling represents a literacy focus, this result recommends the development of a literacy focused-PACT component in all programs as a means

to drive achievement of performance goals. Figure 20 presents the estimated state-wide effect of frequent journaling during PACT on Parent Education and PACT performance indicator achievement.

Figure 20 ~ Association of Journaling in PACT with Parent Ed. And PACT Performance
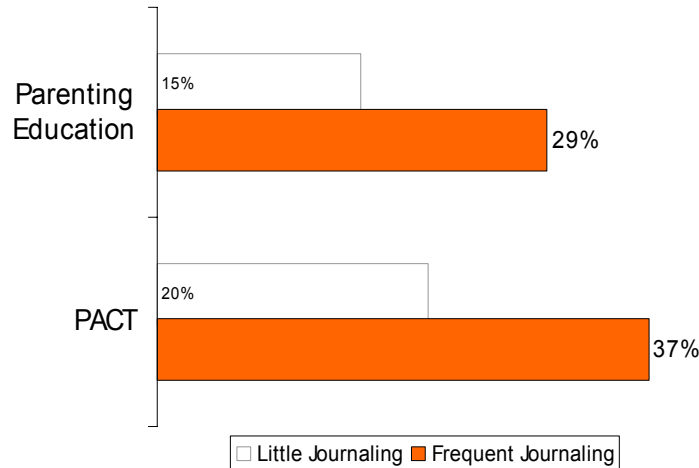
Staff Development

The *Staff Development* section of the TOS was composed of six (6) items. None of the six individual items in the TOS Staff Development section had an association with program performance.

Administration and Enrollment

The *Administration and Enrollment* section of the TOS was composed of ten (10) items. One of the ten items in the TOS *Administration and Enrollment* section showed significant association with programs' performance in meeting their adult education goals:

- The program raised community awareness about the link between parent literacy and child educational success.

This same item also showed significant association with programs' performance in meeting their parenting education goals. One item demonstrated significant association with programs' performance in meeting their PACT goals:

- Your direct supervisor was easy to work with and readily available to answer questions.

Finally, two items showed significant association with programs' performance in meeting their enrollment goals:

- Student retention was high in your program; and,
- Your program raised community awareness about the link between parent literacy and child educational success.

> *We emphasize that raising community awareness was significantly associated with three of the four performance areas: adult education, parenting education, and enrollment. This finding reinforces the importance of the messages a program conveys and the quality of program collaboration with external partners.*

The administrator of one of the most successful programs in the state emphasized collaboration as the *first* item in their program's mission statement,

> *"The mission of the [county] program is to collaborate with its member school districts and community partners to provide comprehensive educational services."*

Evidence from Response Patterns Across Items

Based on the analysis of one-to-one relationships between the performance indicators and the responses to the individual items on the TOS, we explored key patterns in responses across *multiple* TOS items. These patterns were evaluated for associations with performance.

Two important results were identified. The first result was that a strong literacy focus was significantly related to achievement of enrollment targets. The literacy focus was measured as a *weighted average* of the responses to seven TOS items: five from Parenting Education section, and two from the PACT section. These items were:

- Content that supported children's literacy development;
- Instruction of parenting activities that develop a child's literacy skills;
- Frequent opportunities for parents to practice adult literacy skills;
- The regular use of children's books as instructional materials;
- Parents were shown the value of parental involvement in the literacy development of their children;
- Parents and children journal together;
- Parents and children read to each other on a regular basis.

The second result was that a *rigorous, well-structured* PACT component was significantly related to both enrollment achievement and, notably, achievement of Parenting Education goals. The result suggests that a strong PACT design is reflective of a successful approach, in general, to the delivery of family literacy. (Figure 21 illustrates the association between an index of PACT structure, created from the instructors' responses, and enrollment performance in the programs.) The instructors' responses indicated that a rigorous and well-structured PACT component emphasized the following:

- A set schedule for PACT that was the same from week to week;
- Participation in more than four hours of PACT time per week;

- Opportunities for parents and children to journal together;
- Opportunities for parents to help their children complete homework;
- Opportunities for parents to practice skills learned in parenting classes;
- Opportunities for parents to discuss and reflect on their PACT experiences.

Figure 21 ~ Structure of the PACT Component
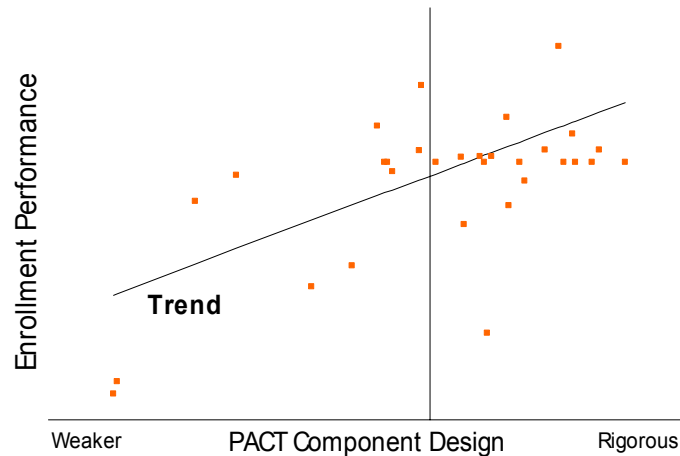
The Adult Learner Self-Reported Experience in 2002-2003

The experience of adults in the 2002-2003 programs was captured through the Adult Learner Survey (ALS). Responses to individual items were analyzed for associations with program performance. The findings are presented below.

Adult Education

Of the seventeen questions on the survey, two exhibited significant association with programs' performance in meeting their adult education goals:

- Did the program help you understand what your child was learning at school?; and,
- Did you look forward to going to each class offered by the program?

Programs whose adult students had high percentages of positive responses to these two questions had high performance in meeting their adult education goals.

Parenting Education

Four of the eighteen questions showed significant association with programs' performance in meeting their parenting education goals:

- Did the program help you get a driver's license, library card, or voter's registrations card?
- Did the program help you understand what your child was learning at school?

- Did the program ever provide transportation (or help you find a ride) when you had no way to get to class?
- Did you look forward to going to each class offered by the program?

PACT

One of the eighteen questions showed significant association with programs' performance in meeting their PACT goals:

- Did the program help you understand what your child was learning at school?

Enrollment

Finally, three of the eighteen questions showed significant positive association with programs' performance in meeting their enrollment goals:

- Did the program help you understand what your child was learning at school?
- Did the program ever provide transportation (or help you find a ride) when you had no way to get to class?
- Did your child ever tell you that they enjoyed or had fun at the program?

Across the four performance areas of adult education, parenting education, PACT, and enrollment, only one of the eighteen questions showed a significant association with all four areas: "Did the program help you understand what your child was learning at school?" Programs whose adult students had a high percentage of positive responses to this question had high performance in meeting their goals in all four areas.

In 28 of the 35 counties where the ALS was administered, *more* than 50% of the adult learners indicated that the program helped them to understand what their child was learning in school. It was estimated state-wide that such counties, on average, attained 90% of their enrollment goal target, 47% of adult education goals, 21% of parenting goals, and 32% of PACT goals. In contrast, counties where the adult learners were not helped to understand what their child was learning in school attained only 86% of their enrollment target, 30% of their adult education goals, 9% of their parenting education goals, and 12% of their PACT goals.

Findings from Interviews and Observations

The TW+A analysts crisscrossed the Bluegrass state in the early spring as they visited the 40 family literacy programs and talked with program administrators and adult education, parenting education, and pre-school instructors. They were able to share in the family literacy experience as they visited large, small, urban and rural programs; they saw individual, small group, and large group instruction and met co-partners and guest speakers. They witnessed children and their parents reading and talking and working together. The instructors they met as a whole are a truly remarkable group of educators; they believe in their mission and stand out as advocates for their families. As one program administrator put it,

"Family Literacy Programs bring together diverse people and cultures. In return, families rise above many obstacles that we may take for granted. As a result, we had a successful year. Each year brings challenges that allow us to grow into a successful and stronger program."

Using information collected from the interviews, observations, and survey findings, the analysts have identified patterns across many programs and found a variety of factors contributing to or inhibiting success. This section documents those findings.

Staff

Staff members who are knowledgeable about the community and its resources were a major driver in the communities' acceptance of the family literacy program, and in the recruitment and retention of students. Responses from instructors who took the TOS indicated that 18% of the instructors had worked with family literacy for 6 years or longer. Staff who were hired before the state required a college degree were "grandfathered" in to meet this requirement. These experienced staff members are paid less than new staff with a college degree.

Instructors with a teaching credential have the background in curriculum, assessment, lesson planning, and instructional strategies that are drivers of quality programs. On the TOS, 48% of the instructors stated they have a degree in education. While in agreement that having teachers on staff with a credential was desirable, 22% of the administrators felt that the low level of salaries was a barrier to hiring and maintaining credentialed teachers. Slightly over 40% of program administrators reported they had at least one credentialed instructor in 2002-2003. Credentialed teachers who were retired or looking for part-time work often filled these positions. In contrast, most program administrators agreed it takes more than a college degree to work successfully with adult learners. One program administrator made that clear when she said,

"Finally our greatest driver was finding the right person for the job ... her personality was a huge driver in our enrollment."

Facilities and Environment

With few exceptions, the facilities visited were clean, well maintained, and safe. Program instructors and adult learners strongly agreed on this point. Facilities were provided by the administering program, usually with ABE and family literacy sharing the site. As the established program, ABE had computers and adult learning materials available which family literacy students also used. Specific materials for parenting and PACT were purchased by the family literacy program. Having a room for PACT that was separate from the adult education classroom was not always possible, which imposed limits on PACT activities. Families participated in the breakfast and lunch program at a few sites.

The availability of transportation was considered by program administrators as a factor that could inhibit or drive enrollment and attendance. When interviewed, 30% of the administrators

included transportation on a list of barriers to enrollment. In urban areas public transportation was available; in many rural areas there was no public transportation. Access to public school buses varied from county to county; oftentimes family literacy students were barred from using them. Some programs such as Even Start or Head Start provided transportation for their own students; family literacy students may or may not have been permitted access to this transportation depending on the relationship between the programs. On the ESA survey, a third of the program administrators indicated that their program facilitated transportation. Survey results of the adult learners (ALS) showed an association between programs' success in meeting their parent education and enrollment goals and their provision of transportation.

Adult Education

The adult education component of family literacy was usually provided by the ABE program on a flexible, highly individualized schedule. The ABE program provided referrals, the facility, assessment, computers, adult education materials, and instruction for adult learners in the family literacy program. Because ABE programs have a longer history than family literacy, they tend to have well-organized programs and are well established in the community.

Following academic assessment, usually on the TABE, the ABE instructor prepared a report identifying the learners' reading level and areas of strength and weakness. Goals for the program were then established. The major driver for the adult education component was obtaining the GED, which was a major focus in recruitment. It appears in some programs that students set unrealistically high goals; expecting to earn the GED rather than addressing their TABE results. One program administrator cautioned,

> *"In setting goals in the family literacy program there is a need to recognize that little steps lead to success."*

A variety of individualized materials were used, including textbooks on all levels and computer software. Computer-assisted instruction included web-based programming. Over 90% of instructors surveyed on the TOS used computers and other technologies to assist in delivering adult classroom instruction. In addition, the ABE instructor worked with individuals or, small groups of students needing help on a similar skill. Some programs provided computers for learners to use at home to supplement work. Class work was self-paced with each adult learner moving at his own rate.

Parenting Education

Most programs planned the parenting curriculum by considering the interests, goals, and needs of their families. Over 60% of the adult learners who completed the ALS stated they helped plan topics for classes. Program administrators for 43% of the programs reported using a pre-determined curriculum or textbook as one component of the parenting curriculum. Flexibility in curriculum planning was important because *"Most at risk formula programs don't meet the needs"*

stated an administrator. Two identified factors played important roles as drivers or barriers to success: goal setting and program design.

The task of adult learners in setting their own goals and tracking their results leads to personal ownership, placing responsibility for success directly on the adult learner and promoting self reliance. The end goal of family literacy is self-sufficiency and self-reliance. The degree to which programs involved adult learners in the process varied greatly. In some programs adult learners kept a folder or notebook which contained clearly identified goals. As steps were reached the adult learner provided the documentation, which was kept in their file, and the family literacy instructor dated and signed off on the goals. On the TOS, one-third (33%) of instructors stated that *the role of parents in assisting in tracking their own progress toward achieving their goals* was not a strong component of their program. However, analysis of the TOS responses revealed a positive association between program success in meeting the parent education goals and programs that required parents to assist in tracking their own goals.

At times parents set goals that required them to attend outside meetings or complete work out of class. However 37% of instructors on the TOS said that the requirement of students to *report on assignments carried out away from the program site* was not a strong component in their program. This limited parent debriefing and made tracking activities difficult.

In addition to setting and tracking goals by the adult learners, many problems were evident in the reporting of results. Twenty-three (23%) of the administrators reported a concern over the accuracy of the data collected at their site or with the data collection system itself. Problems cited by administrators included:

> *"(Our problem was) not clarifying goals which are considered in the statistics."*

> *"We feel the statistics are incorrect, either errors with the data reporting or the system itself."*

> *"During training there was no instruction given on data reporting."*

> *"I think one reason the number is low (percent meeting Parent and PACT targets) is that instructors are simply not marking the goal as achieved."*

A second critical factor in the parent education component involved the method of delivery. The 2001 DAEL Policy and Procedure Manual states that *parent time must occur in a group setting in order to provide peer support for participants*. The value of peer support was confirmed by an administrator who said,

> *"The group of parents had their own mini support group and helped one another in accomplishing their goals."*

In all programs in which there was a parent class scheduled at a regular time on a regular basis, parent time occurred in a group setting with the opportunity for group interaction. This was the case in all programs in which a family night program with a parent meeting was scheduled. The only exception found was when only one participant came for the class or meeting.

In those programs which did not require students to maintain a regular schedule, parenting education was often provided on a one-to-one basis in violation of the DAEL policy requiring such instruction to occur in a group setting. In some programs, parents received the family and life skills instruction found in the ABE curriculum but were not provided the interactive center-based family literacy services which DAEL requires. Twenty five percent (25%) of the instructors indicated on the TOS that their program did not offer parenting education in classes separate from the adult education and PACT.

> *Programs of the highest quality appear to have a regularly scheduled time.*

The quality of the parenting education program varied greatly and was equally dependent on intensity and program design. Programs of the highest quality were offered at regularly scheduled times. After considering the interests, goals, and needs of the families, the yearly program was planned in collaboration with adult education and PACT instructors; community speakers and visits to community sites were added. Textbooks, pamphlets, magazines, technology, and other materials were integrated into the plan. Classes used a variety of instructional strategies and provided opportunities for parents to interact, and helped prepare parents for the PACT experiences.

In at least 11 of the visited programs, the parent education requirement appeared to be fulfilled mainly by a parent workshop scheduled monthly. These workshops/meetings were usually co-sponsored by other agencies such as Family Resource Centers, Even Start, or Head Start and were open to interested members of the community. While these workshops provided information and an opportunity for interaction, they did not appear to meet the criteria established by the DAEL. When structured into a well planned program, they provided an extended learning opportunity. While debriefing in a group setting was not scheduled, discussion between the parent and the parenting education coordinator may have taken place on an informal basis when the parent was at the center for adult education.

Eighteen percent (18%) of the administrators reported having a home-based component in which the family literacy instructor provided adult education, parenting education, and PACT when visiting the home. The instructor was responsible for providing all the learning materials needed for the lessons. Special needs of the student, lack of transportation, and reluctance of the student to come to the center were cited as reasons for home-based instruction.

Integration and Collaboration

The family literacy program is not meant to be a stand-alone program; the level of funding dictates the need for family literacy stakeholders to streamline service, avoid costly duplication, and increase effectiveness, including program quality, intensity, and duration. The state statute requires that the family literacy program "*be designed to reduce duplication with other educational providers to ensure high quality and efficient services.*" (KRS 158.360)[19]

Family literacy staff in each county must raise community awareness about the program, solicit support to help run it, and identify local partnership opportunities. In fact every program collaborated in many ways with other programs and community agencies. Sixty (60%) percent of administrators identified collaboration as a driver of success in enrollment due to community agencies providing referrals. Collaboration between family literacy programs and other agencies included donations of money, door prizes, food, supplies and computers; volunteering to provide help and childcare; providing employability skills; providing health care; and sharing information as guest speakers. In-kind support played a major role in expanding family literacy resources. In many counties, inter-agency groups, including family literacy, met frequently to coordinate services. In addition to working with social service agencies, family literacy programs often co-partnered with other programs providing education and literacy services. Despite the number and variety of collaborations with community-based organizations, many county family literacy programs felt they were only able to provide a bare-bones program. Over 50% of the program administrators in the 120 counties felt that funding was not sufficient.

An additional requirement in the grant application stated that the family literacy program must "*collaborate with appropriate agencies including but not limited to Head Start, KERA preschool, and Family Resource and Youth Services Centers, to provide a <u>unified system</u> of family literacy services.*"[20] An example of a unified system for pre-school children that promotes component integration was one in which the adult education, parent education, and child's education were provided at one site and led to a natural opportunity for PACT in the child's classroom. A program administrator stated:

> "*There is no way that quality family literacy services can be achieved with such limited funding and/or without component integration. Some coordination of services can be achieved if there is a foundation program such as Even Start.*"

However the lack of availability of these *foundation programs* including public, private and charter schools, Even Start, Migrant Education Even Start (MEES), Head Start, and KERA pre-school, and the lack of willingness on the part of some to collaborate did not always make it possible for a county to establish a unified system. In addition this model is not always possible due to the need to accommodate working parents and school-age children.

---

[19] KYAE, Council on Postsecondary Education, *The Commonwealth of Kentucky Master Agreement,* July 2002, p. 10.

[20] KYAE, Council on Postsecondary Education, *The Commonwealth of Kentucky Master Agreement,* July 2002, p. 11.

The level of integration across the curriculum was directly related to the program design and the facilitation of team meetings for program planning. When the four components were located at the same site and instructors crossed over from one role to another as when adult education and parent education were taught by the same person who also helped during PACT and the child education/PACT instructor helped with the parent education component, then the potential for planning together to develop common themes and activities, and to build a shared philosophy, was higher. However, most adult education instructors had not been trained in parent education and PACT and had as their primary responsibilities teaching adult education, providing assessment, and referring adult learners to the family literacy program when appropriate. The value of all staff working together to convey the core message about healthy families and the importance of education cannot be underestimated. Programs (TOS) that stated *all family literacy staff met to identify common messages to communicate to adult learners* were highly associated with more successful program performance.

A limited number of family literacy advocates reported working closely with the teachers of their school age children. They first established a relationship through a phone call or letter explaining the program and their desire to help with any problems the children might have such as attendance, behavior, or academic problems. Parents were required to sign a form allowing the teacher to release information concerning the child. In a few counties this release of information was not allowed, according to the administrator.

Parent and Child Together (PACT)

PACT activities were conducted in three general ways: parent interacting with the child during the child's education time, center-based programs planned to provide activities for the parent and child to do together, and activities provided for parent and child to complete together at home. Many programs offered a combination of structures.

The most intense, high quality interactive literacy activities were provided daily in the blended programs in the pre-school classrooms. The parent and child usually participated in an activity of the child's choice, did reading together, and took part in circle time. Opportunities to provide PACT for school age children in the child's regular classroom were often difficult to arrange; in-class PACT took place infrequently and usually supplemented other PACT activities.

Family Night or center-based programs in the afternoon and evening were very popular, providing opportunities for parent-child interaction. Adult learners surveyed were very positive about the experiences they and their children had in family literacy. The programs usually included dinner or a snack followed by educational games or an art activity related to a seasonal event. Some programs involved parents and children in reading activities including making their own books. Some programs provided opportunities for the parent and child to work together on the computer or to do homework together. The quality and intensity of the programs varied a great deal. PACT programs were held as often as once a week and as infrequently as once or twice a

month; often there was no parenting instruction to prepare parents for the PACT activity; parents tended to focus on the activity rather than observing their child's learning; some programs failed to provide opportunities for parent debriefing. Literacy activities tied to books and writing were not always included in PACT activities; however, there is evidence that these activities support good performance. Field trips were not often planned because of the expense involved.

> *Literacy activities tied to books and writing were not always included in PACT activities; however, there is evidence that these activities support good performance.*

Children from the very young to high school students attended the programs, challenging the instructors to provide developmentally appropriate literacy activities to meet all of the age groups and necessitating a larger staff and/or greater reliance on community volunteers. Administrators reported on the ESA that 50% of the children were under age 6; 30% were ages 6 to 10; and 20% were ages 11 to 18. Methods used to minimize this barrier included limiting the age range of the children in the program, having older children help younger children, dividing children into groups, scheduling PACT activities at different times for different age groups, and planning an activity for which all age groups could participate. Despite the difficulty of meeting the literacy needs of a wide range of children, forty-one (41%) percent of administrators whose programs served multiple age groups reported providing only one activity for the PACT program.

Statements by administrators who were interviewed included:

"One solution to having such divergent age groups would be to focus PACT activities on a particular age range of children, so that their developmental levels would be similar." ~ From an administrator considering applying for a narrower target range in 2004-2005.

"Children beyond age 12 are too difficult to plan activities for and too difficult to get." ~ From an administrator serving children ages birth to 12.

"PACT with three age groups did not work."

"The PACT sessions are facilitated one of two ways: A variety of opportunities are planned for each family (child) contingent on the developmental level of the child: Instruction is planned to target the 'middle' of the developmental range of the children attending class."

"Initially we worked with preschool parents and families yet found that the family resource centers locally have programs they provide. With this in mind we focus our energies on teenage students (age 14 – 18) who very often drop out of school and have lost communication with their parents."

Many programs provided all or some of PACT by preparing packets of materials with ideas and worksheets for families to do at home together. Some type of reading log was often used to track activities. Many programs have developed Back Packs with literacy activities for families to take home. The back packs often included books and hands-on materials to help the parent and child build background prior to reading and extend their experiences beyond the reading. For example a back pack with a fiction and non-fiction book on birds might contain a collection of different kinds of feathers and a magnifying glass for close observation, binoculars for bird watching, and directions for building a bird feeder using inexpensive materials.

To the extent that these take home activities were an extension of center-based instruction and contained well-structured literacy activities they supplemented the PACT program. However, when take home activities were the only PACT activities, the program was not meeting the state requirements. The DAEL Policy and Procedure Manual (July 1, 2001) states that *Parent and Child Time shall be delivered in a manner that ensures interaction between parents and children, be delivered in a supervised setting, and shall be provided on a weekly basis.*

As identified on the TOS, the most successful programs exhibited the following characteristics:

- The PACT component included a set schedule for PACT time that was the same week to week.
- Participation in more than four hours of PACT time each week.
- Planned PACT activities provided opportunities for parents and children to journal together.

Staff Development and Preparedness

The year 2002-2003 was a break-through year for family literacy in the state of Kentucky with the promise of extending services into every county becoming a reality. Twenty-six (26%) percent of the programs were in their first year of service and 33% of the programs were in their second year.

> *"I was not as successful as I had hoped to be, but everyone says that building a good program takes time, and I believe this to be true."*

> *"This being our start-up year and inexperience had everything to do with our level of success.*

Counties received notification in July 2002 of their program acceptance which gave program administrators a little more than 60 days to advertise teacher positions and interview applicants. New family literacy providers and instructors were required to attend implementation training within 3 months of being hired. Administrators reported that the training was only provided one time by DAEL in the fall; the training would have been more helpful if it had been offered earlier. Training was not available for staff hired during the year and the training dealt with theory rather

than how to implement a family literacy program. Opportunities for collaboration with established programs were not facilitated by the state. New programs felt handicapped by not being provided start-up funds to get their programs going. In addition, there was not enough time to complete the many program start-up tasks. A first year administrator stated,

> *"As a first year program, we focused on establishing the Family Literacy Program by doing the following: making connections with community agencies and organizations, setting up a process for enrolling families, creating forms to help us with documentation, creating brochures, marketing our program, recruiting families, and establishing a schedule that would reach large numbers of people."*

Seventy-three (73%) percent of the administrators agreed that the level of success of the program is directly related to the length of time a program is in existence.

> *"The length of time contributes greatly to our understanding of family literacy, what's important, and how to effectively integrate services. It has clarified the difference in family education programs and family literacy and has kept us on track. The longevity has made it possible to see the benefits of a quality intensive program over a program that merely mimics the four components."*

A comparison of the estimated state-wide results[21] for existing and new programs is presented in Table 15. The differences in performance between first year programs and those existing before 2002-2003 were found to be statistically significant. This suggests that a change in policy regarding performance expectations might be advisable.

Table 15 ~ Estimated Percent of Performance Goals Met by Age of Program

Programs	Enrollment	Adult Education	Parenting Education	PACT
Existing Prior to 2002-03	94%	50%	20%	27%
New in 2002-03	76%	26%	12%	18%

As part of a collaborative effort at the state level, staff development for family literacy is provided by KIFL. Eighty-six (86%) percent of the instructors who completed the TOS survey reported that staff development was required; 30% felt that staff developments topics were irrelevant. A lack of preparedness was evident in the grant application forms; while many of the program designs were described in detail as required, a large percentage described goals but gave little information on how the services would be provided. Some applicants stated a lack of experience in family literacy program implementation was a reason for a lack of program detail. In

---

[21] A joint test at the 95% confidence level of the differences in mean performance between new and existing programs across all 4 performance indicators indicated that new programs exhibited consistently lower performance results. This test was performed using only the data from the 40 visited counties because accurate data on program age was only available for these counties.

addition, some programs reported that once they had enrolled students they were not able to implement the program as described in their grant. In using the program design worksheet, one administrator echoed the comments of many other administrators when she said,

> *"The form is hard to complete because things don't work that easily in real life and what is on the form as far as hours is not what usually ends up taking place in the classroom."*

Enrollment and Administration

Enrollment and attendance were factors of monumental importance and in most programs areas of great struggle. One administrator stated,

> *"Students have to be ready to make a commitment. Students come and go. You plant a seed. When ready many of the students will come back."*

Family literacy staff promoted family literacy programs through ads and brochures, outreach to schools and community agencies, and a variety of other techniques: however the greatest driver to enrollment success was referrals made by other agencies such as Family Resource Centers, Head Start Centers, and the adult basic education programs. Administrators stated,

> *"Barriers included finding families who wanted to participate and who had time to participate and, if not in Head Start, had their own transportation."*

> *"A major driver to this success (enrollment) can be accredited to the close relationship with the adult education department, door-to-door recruiting efforts, and outreach in area schools (mainly preschools)."*

The age range of children whose families qualified for the program was a factor that affected enrollment. Historically the age range of children in family literacy programs in Kentucky has varied. The earliest PACT program required that the parent have a three- or four- year old child. In 1998, the age was broadened to zero to eight years of age and later extended to age twelve. Having the wider age range of birth to 18 has made recruitment of families for some programs easier but has complicated the implementation of parent education and PACT components by placing greater demands for a wider range of materials, a larger staff, more volunteers, the need for more PACT classes to support different age groups, and widening the scope of coverage to the middle and high school for PACT and teacher interaction. Administrators reported that it was a challenge to meet the developmental needs of all the children in their program. The quotes cited in our discussion of PACT provide excellent descriptions of some of the issues involved.

Of equal importance to enrollment was family retention and attendance. A note in the performance indicators document states, "There is no indicator for retention; however, it is understood that programs will be unlikely to meet other performance goals if families are not retained long enough for them to make progress." Adult basic education and family literacy programs are voluntary programs (with the exception of the child's education); efforts to mandate

the number of hours can be enforced only as a condition for completion, with a few exceptions. Forty-nine (49%) percent of instructors on the TOS reported that student retention was high in their program. The larger counties which had multiple sites provided programs on several levels of intensity. The highest level had the strongest attendance requirements. Students with attendance problems could be put on probation and, with no improvement, transferred to a program with less stringent attendance standards. Some students were mandated by the courts or other social agencies to attend a family literacy program, with attendance requirements set. Attendance for these students tended to be quite high. Administrators felt the attitude and effort of these students was equal to those who were attending voluntarily.

Efforts to retain families and promote attendance were varied. A large majority of the programs reported that phone calls and visits to the home were frequently made when attendance started to drop. Providing interesting, relevant programs that met the needs of the parent and the child and providing culminating events and celebrations promoted attendance. Many incentives such as raffle drawings, door prizes, providing food, and free books as rewards were used to promote attendance. In some programs students accumulated points through attendance and reaching their goals, and earned larger rewards such as a compute or a special field trip. Sixty three percent (63%) of the administrators interviewed used incentives to promote attendance.

Ten programs were found to offer free computers as a retention incentive. Six of these programs (located in Bath, Daviess, Hardin, Henry, Jefferson,[22] and Pendleton counties) were based on the *Next Step*[23] program model. The other four (located in Campbell, Gallatin, Jessamine, and Trimble counties) were based on other program models. An analysis of the use of computer-based enrollment incentives found a statistically significant difference in the attainment rate of a program's enrollment goal as shown in Table 16.

Table 16~ Estimated Percent of Enrollment Goals Met by Incentive Offered

Programs	Count	Percent of Goal Met
Offered Computer Incentive	10	98%
Did Not Offer Computer Incentive	30	86%

Attendance tended to drop on Mondays and Fridays, before or after a holiday, and during inclement weather. Adult education program sites were open up to 52 weeks per year which was quite helpful for individuals who didn't have children. However the attendance of families was greatly affected by the public school schedule. Often when children were out of school, attendance dropped. Some families left for vacations when the schools were closed. Programs that met at public schools adjusted their schedule to the school schedule.

[22]   Jefferson County provides services at multiple sites; not all sites employ the Next Steps program.

[23]   The Next Step Family Literacy program model was developed for the Bullitt County Family Literacy Program.

The adult education and family literacy program year ran from July to June. Most instructors adjusted their programs during July and August, moving from a center-based program to a less structured program. The family literacy coordinator tried to stay in touch with students by making home visits and dropping off packets of materials for families to work on. A special monthly activity or field trip was sometimes held. Families were encouraged to attend other community programs in the summer such as reading programs at the library.

Another factor reported by administrators involved the funding schedule. Administrators lost valuable employees because they had to hand out *pink slips* until they were assured of the funding amount. Establishing program sites and enrollment of students were held up. Their programs were required to have additional funding source to hold them over until the state provided funding in the fall.

Many factors inhibiting success were related to understanding program requirements, data collection, and data reporting. Comments from administrators regarding these issues include:

- Because instructors and sites changed frequently within a program due mainly to student shifts in attendance, information reported to DAEL became outdated quickly. Administrators frequently did not report the changes in a timely manner.

- Students were counted as enrolled after they have 12 hours in the program. However some of these students left before they were re-assessed on the TABE or other assessment measures and their progress could not be recorded. This had a negative impact on the program's goal attainment since student retention was not considered.

- There were questions related to a student's completion of the family literacy program. In some programs a student had completed his goals when the academic or employment related goals are met. Others required the student to complete the adult education, parenting education, and PACT goals for program completion.

COMMENDATIONS

The Commonwealth of Kentucky has maintained a 25 year commitment to family literacy. It has been, and continues to be, a widely recognized supporter of family literacy services and exerts a strong national influence. There has been a positive trend over the years as reflected in the following state family literacy milestones:

- Since 1943, Kentucky has continued its commitment to the General Educational Development (GED) testing program. The state has issued over 354,000 high school equivalency credentials.

- Since 1965, Kentucky has been a full partner with Federal legislation in sustaining the state commitment to provide literacy programs for adults and children.

- Kentucky is one of the original states to authorize and appropriate a family literacy initiative through enactment of the Parent and Child Education (PACE) legislation in 1985.

- In 1988, Kentucky's PACE legislation became a model for the federal Even Start program.

- CPE is a partner with The National Center for Family Literacy (NCFL), established in 1989, in the concept and implementation of family literacy initiatives, and in support of services for professional staff development.

- The Kentucky Institute for Family Literacy (KIFL) was founded in 2000 to work with all the state's family literacy stakeholders to coordinate planning and resources.

- The administrative structure for family literacy and adult education has a high profile in the state's educational governance structure.

- In 2002 Kentucky established family literacy services in every county, only the second state in the nation to do this.

Satisfaction with the family literacy program by participants is further evidence of the success of the program. The adult learners surveyed felt they had had a positive experience while making academic gains, and would recommend the family literacy program to other families in their community.

OPPORTUNITIES

TW+A identified actions that could lead to improvement in the family literacy programs in Kentucky over the long term. Actions to consider include:

1. Re-evaluate the credentialing requirements for instructors.

2. Establish a policy of hiring full time instructors, rather than filling positions with part-time instructors.

3. Review the family literacy implementation training to ensure usefulness of the content.

4. Conduct a survey of instructors to determine their needs for staff development.

5. Design instructional practices to promote accountability for the adult learner. Encourage the development of procedures that involve parents in tracking their progress towards their own goals including methods of documenting out of class activities.

6. Identify successful family literacy programs as model programs and demonstration sites for other programs to emulate.

7. Utilize available resources to mitigate transportation as a barrier.

8. Continue the two-year grant funding cycle with a requirement that at the end of the first year programs not meeting enrollment or performance goals must develop a Program Improvement Plan with a timeline for achieving their goals.

9. Develop a longitudinal research study to track a sample of families as one measure of accountability for the family literacy program.

10. Develop a research study using currently available school data for factors such as attendance and grades to demonstrate past performance of children served in the family literacy program.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations support Kentucky's commitment to family literacy and are based directly on evidence developed during the study.

1. **Strengthen the parenting education and PACT components through a well-designed curriculum, including a focus on literacy.**

    Actions that could be used to implement this recommendation include:

    ■ Provide staff development to help instructors design parenting education curriculum using a variety of sources. While exclusive use of a pre-determined curriculum and/or textbook are not recommended, their flexible use as one component of the parenting education curriculum can help to provide structure and a literacy focus, especially for new instructors.

    ■ Provide training for instructors in designing a lesson; using a variety of instructional strategies such as cooperative learning, role-playing, hands-on activities, and interactive teaching; and planning ways to connect children's books to parenting education and PACT activities.

    ■ Ensure that all take home parent-child activities are literacy focused and meet parenting and PACT goals.

    ■ Place greater emphasis on parents and children reading and writing together and engaging in these activities on a regular, daily basis including promoting regular use of the public library or other community resources.

2. **Promote program designs that provide regular, center-based, interactive class time for parenting education and for PACT.**

    Actions that could be used to implement this recommendation include:

    ■ Work with programs to schedule regular parenting education and PACT classes. Consider limiting the range of open hours or days when the adult education component is provided to family literacy students to help with scheduling classes. Offer parenting education and PACT on two different days to maintain scheduling flexibility for families.

    ■ For counties serving school-age children, encourage the integration of components by scheduling adult education, parenting education, and PACT at the same site and following each other weekly or twice-weekly.

3. **Identify and promote successful enrollment, retention, and attendance policies.**

    Actions that could be used to implement this recommendation include:

- Conduct a research study to examine the results of modifying the definition of enrollment (which is based on a 12-hour requirement) to determine its effect on enrollment, retention, and performance.

- Re-evaluate the target goal of serving families with children from birth to 18. Consider further study to answer the questions, "Is this age range setting the bar too high by counting in older children for which this program may not appropriate, who may be difficult to enroll and retain, and who stretch the services of the program? Is there a more appropriate age range?"

- Provide access to the breakfast and lunch program for families whenever possible.

- Continue to emphasize the need to report attendance and retention data on family literacy students.

- Have family literacy instructors use the months when they have fewer students for major recruitment of new families; making personal connections through home visits; attending professional development activities; planning their program; and supporting families as they establish goals for the coming year.

- Formally evaluate the effect of computer-incentive based programs on enrollment, retention, attendance, and performance, possibly through pilot program tests.

4. **Continue to use technology, including Web-based instruction, in adult education and parenting education curricula as a *supplement* to instruction in a well-rounded interactive program.**

    Actions that could be used to implement this recommendation include:

    - Reinforce academic skills and build computer literacy skills through the use of technology in a functional context.

5. **Place greater emphasis on an integrated program in which common themes are imbedded in activities and a core message is clearly articulated throughout the components.**

    Actions that could be used to implement this recommendation include:

    - Cross-train adult education teachers to deliver instruction in all components of the program including adult education, parenting education, and PACT.

    - Identify methods to promote regularly scheduled local staff meetings to include at a minimum the instructors who serve family literacy students for adult education, parenting education, and PACT.

    - Emphasize the importance of preparing parents for the PACT activity during the parenting education time.

    - Structure programs to provide opportunities for parents to discuss what happened in the parent and child time.

6.   **Strengthen collaboration between family literacy programs and their community schools.**

Actions that could be used to implement this recommendation include:

-   ■   Define the responsibilities of the parenting education coordinator to include regular communication with the teachers of school age children, to serve as advocates for the families in the education system, and to represent family literacy at board meetings and school staff meetings.

-   ■   In addition to maintaining contact with each child's teacher, develop a *simple* form for the teacher to complete several times a year to document performance for the child, and in relation to the entire class, for attendance, homework completion, behavior, and parent/teacher interaction as a measure of accountability.

-   ■   Make connections in adult education and parenting classes to the role of the parent in participating as an advocate for their child.

7.   **Support and provide leadership and direction for state level collaboration across agencies providing family literacy services to minimize competition and eliminate duplication.**

Actions that could be used to implement this recommendation include:

-   ■   Extend the role of KYAE as an advocate for family literacy with other educational agencies, social service agencies, the courts, and other stakeholders to mitigate barriers identified in this study.

REFERENCES

Chisman, Forrest P., "Adult Education & Literacy and Community Colleges in Kentucky," Council for Advancement of Adult Literacy, May 2004.
http://www.caalusa.org/caal_ky_case_chisman.pdf

Kentucky Department for Adult Education & Literacy, "Council on Postsecondary Adult Education Action Agenda," November 13, 2000.
http://adulted.state.ky.us/CPE_adult_education_action_plan.htm

Kentucky Department for Adult Education & Literacy, "Policy and Procedure Manual for Providers Funded by the Department for Adult Education and Literacy," July 1, 2001.
http://adulted.state.ky.us/archive/policy and procedure manual 2001.doc

Kentucky Department for Adult Education & Literacy, Council on Postsecondary Education, "The Commonwealth of Kentucky Master Agreement," July 2002.

King, C. and R Stagnolia, "Kentucky State Plan For Adult Education And Family Literacy," 2001.
http://adulted.state.ky.us/kentucky_state_plan.htm#Performance%20Measures

Popp, Robert J., "Past and Present Educational Experiences of Parents Who Enrolled in Kenan Trust Family Literacy Programs," Partnership for Family Education and Support, November 20, 1991.
http://www.bobpopp.com/files/past_and_present_exps.cfm

RMC Research Corporation, "Guide to Quality: Even Start Family Literacy Program, Volume 1 (revised)." Manuscript submitted for publication. June 2001.

Simmons, Ada B. et al, "Kentucky Statewide Family Literacy Initiative: Summary Evaluation Report," Indiana Education Policy Center, December 2002.

United States Department of Education, Office of Vocational and Adult Education, "Target Population Report (Interim), May 2004.